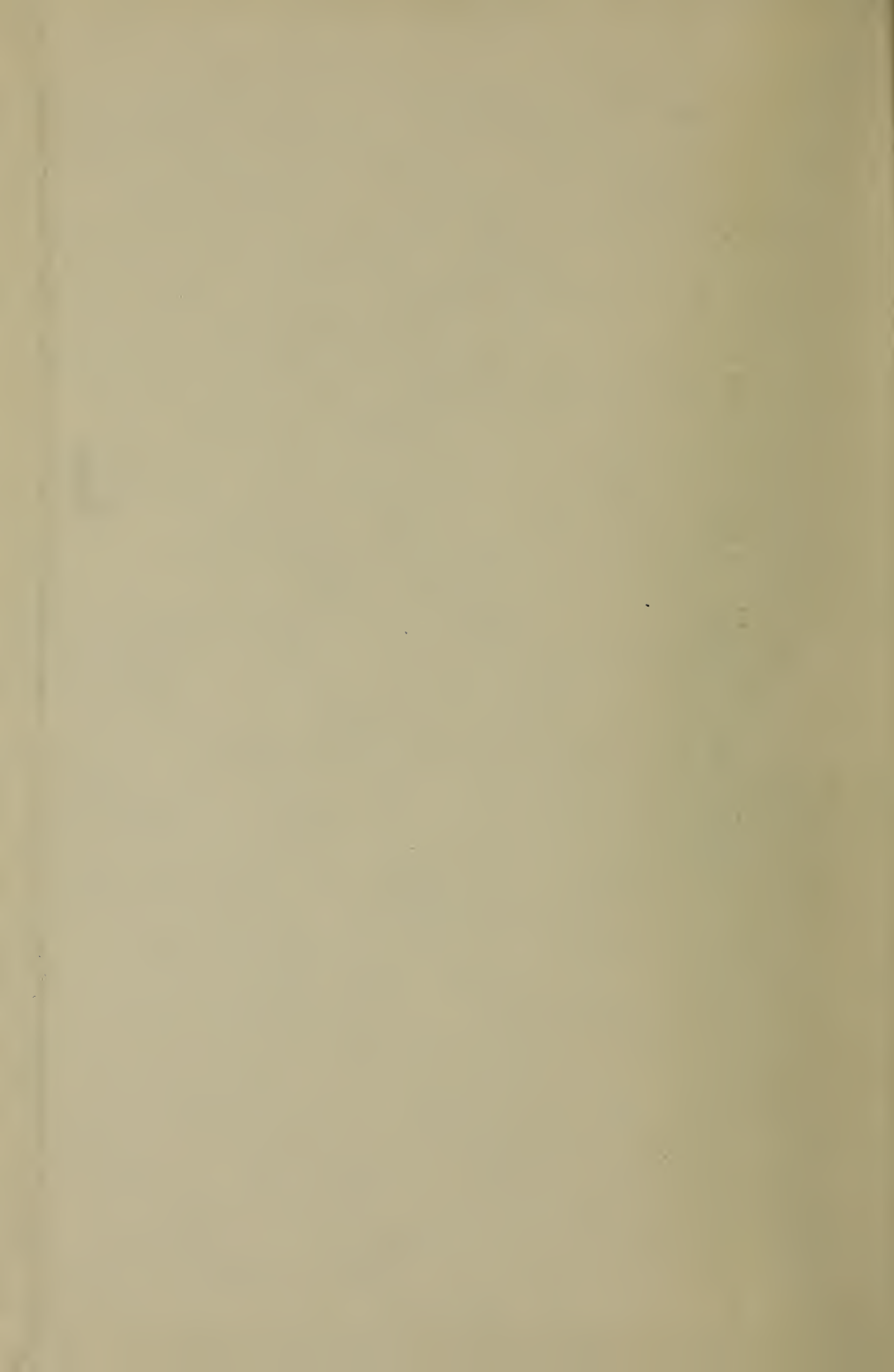






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THE FIELD AT HOME

Joy is prayer

Joy is strength

Joy is love

Mother Teresa

THE FIELD AT HOME

VOLUME XLIX / NUMBER 1 / 1973

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Yellow Spring



*April came, full
Of yellow flowers,
The brook was yellow, the hill,
The children's graveyard
And the orchard where love was living.*

*The sun annointed the world with yellow
With downpouring rays.
Ah through the golden lilies,
The warm golden water,
The yellow butterflies
Over the golden roses.*

*Yellow garlands were climbing
Up the trees, the day
Was a grace perfumed with gold
In a golden awakening of life
Among the boxes of the dead.
God opened his yellow hands.*

— Jiménez

MEMO . . . *from the editor's desk*

A Hint of an Explanation is, I think, the title of one of Graham Greene's short stories. The title is appropriate for my purpose here because our readers deserve a hint, at least, of an explanation for the erratic way in which THE FIELD AT HOME has been appearing.

Though our magazine has never been its editor's sole concern, for many years all other tasks were S.O.S. assigned and were done within the Community itself so to adjust time blocks was not too difficult. Then the editor came to Ottawa to work for the Canadian Religious Conference and, later, for the Canadian Catholic Conference. In both places she had full-time jobs but only as director of a single department. Since February 1, 1973, however, she has

been the Assistant Executive Director of the Catholic Hospital Association of Canada. C.H.A.C. is in the process of revitalization and reorganization so that it may be a dynamic force at a time when Catholic hospitals in Canada are under severe pressure from many areas. The small staff at C.H.A.C. is also under pressure which we believe and hope will lessen as we become better organized, with priorities established and work-lines drawn. In the meantime spare time is almost non-existent. Therefore your editor begs your indulgence and patience.

Since an explaining mood is upon me I shall drop the editorial second and third person and come back to the first person which comes so much more naturally.

During my first years as editor of THE FIELD AT HOME I spent a great deal of time travelling around Canada doing public relations for the Sisters of Service. Always I was armed with two cameras; one for colored slides, the other for black and white pictures. Since I visited most of the S.O.S. missions most years there was no dearth of S.O.S. material for the magazine. There were stories everywhere and I took my own pictures.

With the change to Ottawa the above was no longer possible. Frequently, very frequently, magazine time came and the cupboard was completely bare of material. I understand and sympathize with the sisters on the various missions. Even I, who people say have a facility for writing, found it extremely difficult to find time to write when I was on the missions myself. We all loved the magazine, we all wanted to do something for it, but there never seemed to be time unless it was given as a definite assignment to one or other of us with the time necessary to do an article.

Well, one long night here in Ottawa I could not sleep. I had no faint idea of what to do about the next issue since I didn't have a single line from anyone, anywhere, that I could expand into an article. Frantic is not too strong to describe my state of mind. I got up, went into the living room, and without bothering with a light, turned the stereo on. I didn't know what record was on the turntable. I sat beside the stereo and worried until the words of the song gradually began to penetrate. As I listened an idea dawned. The song was Simon and Garfunkel's *Sounds of Silence*. Excitedly I turned on a light and pulled out all the folk-singers' records I had. Finally, with a pad and pencil, I settled down to write the words as I listened. I have no idea what time I finally went to bed but that night was the genesis of THE FIELD AT HOME as it is today.

Obviously I worried about the reception this type of presentation would receive. But it was equally obvious that I could not publish x number of blank pages. Surprisingly the reaction was almost overwhelmingly good and has continued to be so. Of course there have been exceptions.

One Bishop from a missionary diocese in which the S.O.S. are doing great work complained that there was nothing in the magazine about the work of the sisters anywhere. I told him I would be thrilled to have articles about our work in the home missions. He assured me that as soon as he returned home he would arrange for me to have an article from his area for every issue. That was many months ago but I have not yet received anything.

Mind you, I am convinced that with so many Catholic magazines folding, those which remain should not be concerned totally with their own vested interests. I believe firmly that we should give people something to think about which touches on the great issues of our day and, more importantly, something which will invite them to reflective prayer about those issues.

I am equally convinced that THE FIELD AT HOME should tell something about the work of the Sisters of Service: in the Yukon, in Churchill, in Labrador – all new endeavours; in the solo apostolates in Vancouver, Edmonton, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal, Halifax, St. John's and, yes, Ottawa; in the reorganized Daly Centre for Religious Education in Regina which is now a part of the CCC's National Office for Religious Education. One article from each of these places, not to mention Edson, Oneway and the missions in the Peace River country, would keep the magazine going for several years.

Without some contribution I seriously question how long I can keep on. And this truly worries me. I think we have a good magazine, I would hate to see it cease publication. But . . . I have said this many times in many ways. Perhaps I am not being wise in saying it publicly, but perhaps also, if our readers support me, we can bring the S.O.S. back into the news and give THE FIELD AT HOME a new lease on life. I hope with all my heart that this will happen.

Look North – really North – to the ESK-OMI Missions

We S.O.S., who have had so much evidence of the dedication and selflessness of the Oblate Fathers, are happy to publish the following appeal.

“There, scattered in the Arctic amid the snow, ice and rock, you will find our sixteen Eskimo missions. More than forty missionaries, spreading the word of God and planting the seeds of love and hope, must constantly struggle against this cold, cruel and unforgiving land. To make things even more difficult, their source of funds is practically non-existent.

Please do not let these missionaries labour alone. Please help them. Your support will be so precious.

ESK-OMI Missions

P.O. Box 89, Otterburne, Manitoba R0A 1G0

The World's Most Northern Missions

(All donations personally acknowledged and an official receipt issued).

To Sister, with love

Ella Zink, SOS

During our Jubilee Year as I endeavored to outline the history of the Sisters of Service in the pages of *THE FIELD AT HOME*, I was constantly bothered by what I considered to be an important omission. Not a single issue during 1972 carried a single line about the fine and dedicated women who have led us as Sisters General. Sister Florence Regan, our first S.O.S. Sister General, died early in 1972 and she was written about. But not a line about the five others who are still alive.

Just about here I can hear each of these five sisters, in her own corner of the country, saying to herself: "Good heavens, what is she doing?" Relax, Sisters, I am not attempting a biography; I am not going to be heavy-handed with praise. I just want to jot down some very personal thoughts about each of you because, to me, what you were and are explains what the Sisters of Service are. The following expresses why I want to write this:

We get along these days without disclosing how we feel –
without using expressions of endearment,
without shedding tears of grief, or of relief, or of joy –
without the touch of a hand,
the blessed reaching out of the heart when words are not enough.
We can keep our emotions under tight control.
But what spice it adds to life,
what meaning it adds to our lives,
when we let our hearts show!
Grant me the maturity to show my love. Amen



SISTER MARGARET GUEST

I had decided to enter the Sisters of Service about whom I knew next to nothing. Since I was going to Toronto for a few days Sister Schenck, at that time Superior of the S.O.S. house in Montreal, suggested that I visit the Mother House and meet Sister Guest, the recently elected Sister General. The only Mother Houses I had ever seen or been in were enormous institutions; a Sister General I had never seen in my life. State visits to the various schools I had attended were always made by Mothers Provincial.

When I arrived at the old Mother House on Wellesley Place I discovered that Sister Guest was at the Novitiate in Rosedale. Sister Coates was returning there so was commissioned to take me with her. I don't remember much about it but I must have been awfully ill at ease because Sister Coates still teases me about that walk.

I waited in a room I was to know well indeed for this awesome being, a Superior General, to appear. Suddenly a tall, slim, regal, and *young* Sister appeared in the doorway. I remember gasping, "You're not Sister General." But she was; she was also delightfully easy to talk to with a truly remarkable

sense of humor; the kind of sense of humor that makes you instinctively look in her direction at times knowing that you will catch her eye and you'll enjoy together, no matter how unobtrusively, some rib-tickling occurrence.

Though Sister Guest was Sister General for some years after I made my vows, I think her greatest influence on me came during novitiate days. Anything which came later only confirmed and strengthened those first impressions.

Sister Guest is a woman of rare understanding, a quality shared by our other Sisters General also. I am sure that, because we were few and less structured than older Congregations, because of the type of life and work we were being prepared for, our novitiate training was probably less restrictive than in most Congregations of the day. But we were pre-Vatican II and, to this graduate nurse who had nursed, made decisions, and thought for herself for several years, the novitiate was not really a picnic. There were times, not too many but some, when I felt I could not stand the routine, the minutiae. Though Sister Guest did not live at the Novitiate she visited it frequently and she always seemed to realize my state of mind. Suddenly I would be given a little change which proved to be a life-saver, a breathing space in which to re-arm, as it were. Once I thanked her for this and she said, "I thought you looked as if you needed a break." A small thing but it probably saved a religious vocation.

For me one of Sister Guest's outstanding contributions to all of us was her insistence that we be independent, that we do for ourselves. Her Sisters of Service were not to expect others to put themselves out for us just because we were religious. I think her teaching in this regard has remained with us. So often people say, half chidingly, "You people are so independent." Even as they say it one feels that they are grateful because we do not expect anyone to be at our beck and call.

I could write pages about Sister Guest, as I could about all our Sisters General. I shall only say that by her example she helped us to be womanly women, to relate to others easily and unaffectedly but always as religious; that she was years ahead of her time and has always remained so.



SISTER MARY QUINN

Perhaps it is because Sister Quinn was my first local superior that so many of my memories of her centre around the years with her in the hospitals of Edson and Vilna.

When I arrived in Edson as a second-year novice the letter announcing my coming arrived on the same train. It was no great feat to find the hospital however where I presented myself at the admission wicket. Sister Mill rushed off to tell Sister Quinn and came back to take me to the second floor. As we started up the stairs I saw her leaning over the landing. Her sleeves were rolled way above her elbows and she wore an O.R. cap and mask. She had been about to scrub for an operation. Informal, friendly and forthright with a scintillating Irish wit – that is Sister Quinn.

Her wit made for so much brightness and laughter among patients, doctors, nurses, staff. How those patients loved her, especially the men. We never let

her forget the time that two of our patients, who were Workmen's Compensation Board cases, went into Edmonton and had their picture taken together just for her. Nor the patient, whose English was rather rudimentary, who sent her flowers with a card inscribed to my dear mother-in-law.

But I think thoughtfulness is Sister Quinn's outstanding characteristic. On my first evening in Edson she gave me several good pictures of the hospital which, though small was very modern, for my mother. She said that our families in the East usually had weird notions about the West, they thought we lived in tepees and were terribly deprived, so seeing actual pictures put their minds at ease. And through all the years when she was my local superior and later my Sister General that thoughtfulness never wavered, towards me, and towards my mother. Nothing was too much trouble if it made the visits of families or friends enjoyable; nothing which helped anyone was ever too much trouble.

Sister Quinn was always very direct; she did not beat around bushes. This was helpful to a young sister. If you had difficulties, no matter with what or whom, she did not try to talk you out of thinking you had them. She faced them head-on with you. In fact she often anticipated them and prepared you. This gave her real credibility and was confidence-inspiring. Nor did she beat around the bush in telling you you were lacking or wrong.

I remember one particularly rough day in Vilna. We had been called by the night-nurse long before the usual time for rising at 6 a.m. We had been hard at work all day with one new patient after another being admitted, and one new crisis after another among the older admissions. As is inevitable, fatigue and strain made tempers short. It must have been around 11 p.m. when I did something stupid, though I don't remember what, and was told summarily to go to bed. I went to the chapel for the first time that day and had been there only a few minutes when Sister called me out. I don't know how she did it but I followed her downstairs to the kitchen to find a plate of hot buttered toast in the warming oven and a pot of tea on the stove. She said, "I knew you were tired and worried about being sent off and I hate anyone to go to bed unhappy."

Yes, God has been extremely good to us in our Sisters General.



SISTER AGNES DWYER

Our Community is so small that we usually know one another. But one sister I had not met until I came back East permanently in 1954 was Sister Agnes Dwyer. She had just been appointed Novice Mistress and I was to take over the Novitiate choir. That was the beginning of a fine friendship.

Sister Dwyer is another woman with a great sense of humor. Thank God, He has endowed our Sisters General bountifully in this area. She also loves beauty and her going to the Novitiate when she did was providential. The Community had achieved enough financial stability that we had both time and money to acknowledge that women need beauty in their lives if they are to be truly feminine. Heaven knows Sister Dwyer was never, nor could she be, extravagant. But when she received an occasional gift she would use it for something beautiful: a pair of white Wedge-

wood vases for the chapel; an exquisite Hummel Holy Family group; a bowl or a candlestick which, strategically placed, caught the light and brightened up darker areas of rooms. She rediscovered old household gods that had always been in the Novitiate but out of sight. It was Sister Dwyer, too, who found an old but serviceable rug somewhere – in the basement or garage, I suppose. The novices loved to carry it around on feast days and during holiday seasons. It would appear in the common room whose long table had been pushed against a wall, or in Sister's own office which had an open fireplace. All the comfortable chairs, such as they were, in the house were carried to where the gathering was to be held, the fireplace and candles lit, and the room, to those of us who were there at least, became a comfortable and gracious living room.

Sister Dwyer succeeded Sister Quinn as Sister General. Religious Communities were beginning to grope towards renewal which was, for most, a more or less painful process. I believe that if the history of the Sisters of Service is ever written Sister Dwyer's contribution to the renewal of our life as religious will rate very highly indeed.

A very quiet person, Sister Dwyer did everything quietly. She allowed the fresh air of renewal into the Community not by making great or radical changes, but by allowing experimentation. The experiments were not Community-wide but answered felt needs of individual sisters or houses. Thus change came about in a non-startling way which made acceptance very much easier.

I remember being very concerned about the "corporate image" of the Community. Our original letterhead, for example, had been beautiful when it was first designed but it was obsolete in the 1960's, perhaps archaic would be a better word. I was most anxious to attend a seminar on, among other things, the "corporate image" but I did not want to attend alone. Everyone at the Mother House was deeply involved and could not take time to come. Sensing my disappointment, Sister Dwyer quietly put her own work away and came with me. Very soon after we had a well-designed, crisp and modern "logo" for our letterheads and other documents.

Flexibility and adaptability are other virtues in our Sisters General for which we thank the Lord.



SISTER MARY REANSBURY

When Sister Reansbury came to Toronto to replace one of the sisters on the General Council, whom ill-health had forced to resign, she really knew almost nothing about the old Mother House. Because our Mother House and Novitiate were separately housed, most of us had a very superficial knowledge of the physical set-up at Wellesley Place. It was a beautiful old house with exquisite wood panelling, and an enormous leaded and partly stained glass window at the right of an impressive staircase which went to the second floor. The back stairs which went right to the third floor as well were ugly and killing to climb. The accommodation was crowded and ill-suited to the needs of senior sisters especially.

Sister Reansbury is a professional hospital administrator and a business

woman. As I grew to know her I found her concern for the senior sisters edifying and appealing; she exerted herself to be kind, helpful and understanding of their problems. Then she succeeded Sister Agnes Dwyer as Sister General.

For years we had talked about a new Mother House, we had even acquired a beautiful property in the north end of the city. With Vatican II we took another look at this property and decided that Sisters of Service should be downtown, among the people, not in the rarefied atmosphere of Willowdale. Sister Reansbury made it an absolute priority to get a new Mother House.

Sister had experience with Advisory Boards; she was a business woman who knew how important an Advisory Board can be. She got a Board for the Mother House and what a group of tremendously interested people we were fortunate to enlist as Board members. It would require many pages to describe the amount of work these devoted men and one woman did to sell the Willowdale property and to help find a more suitable location. Finally it was accomplished, an architect selected and the work began. Our new Mother House was designed and built with the comfort of senior sisters, who had spent most of their religious lives in discomfort, in mind. The new, homelike and eminently comfortable without being showy Mother House is a tribute and a monument to Sister Reansbury.

But the Mother House was not enough. Our Sisters in Toronto had nowhere to go for a vacation. I wonder how many miles Sister Reansbury travelled in the car to locate a summer cottage. (A car, by the way, which she had bought again with the comfort and convenience of the senior sisters in mind.) The Lord certainly blessed her efforts because He led her to a perfect cottage in a perfect location on Lake Simcoe which we bought at a bargain price. And what a delight that cottage is not only to sisters in Toronto but to visiting sisters from across Canada.

Sister Reansbury is a reserved and, I think, a basically shy person. Because of this it could be that we have not recognized or sufficiently appreciated just how great her contribution to the Sisters of Service has been. She is now back at her old love of hospital administration in Edson. I miss her when I go to Toronto; I miss her genuineness, her sincerity, the knowledge that she really cares. There are many things I could say about her kindness to me. But essentially we must recognize her as the person with the drive and the determination to give us, not only a Mother House – a vital part of a religious community – but a summer home as well.

For the determination and stick-to-itiveness of our Sisters General, dear Lord we thank You.

SISTER PATRICIA BURKE

It is going to be difficult to write about Pat Burke. First of all she was a dear friend long before she became Sister General. Secondly she is still in that office and could clobber me if she doesn't like what I write. When I returned East permanently in 1954 I, as was the custom, was invited to the Novitiate for dinner. We ate outdoors



and I was greatly impressed by a trim novice with gorgeous red hair – (she'll kill me for that) – who seemed to be everywhere, keeping the whole business of serving a delicious meal outdoors moving efficiently.

After she made her vows Sister Burke remained at the Novitiate for a time as assistant to the Novice Mistress, Sister Agnes Dwyer. During that time she occasionally accompanied me as I travelled about showing slides and talking about the S.O.S. That was when I learned that she was not only efficient, she was a barrel of fun. Nobody could have been happier than I when, some ten or eleven years later, she was elected by the entire Community to be Sister General. It was the first time *all* the sisters had voted for a Sister General – formerly only the members of the General Chapter had done so – and Sister Burke was elected overwhelmingly.

A professional social worker with many years experience, Sister Burke has used the tools of her profession with loving insight in her position as Leader of a far-flung and small Community.

Formerly, as was the custom with most Communities, the annual visitation of the various missions by Sister General was annual, once a year for a few days, the length of the visit depended on the size of the local community. Though many of us questioned the value of this type of visitation, none of us questioned its survival – this was the custom and custom had been too long canonized. Its obvious disadvantage was that everyone knew exactly when Sister General was arriving and for weeks ahead work was so organized that every sister on every mission had a great deal of free time when Sister General arrived. (This was not so true of the teaching and hospital missions where next week's work could not be done ahead of time, but even in these missions adjustments were made.) The consequence was that many of us believed that the visiting Sister General never did get an accurate picture of the mission, its works, and its personnel.

With Sister Burke this changed. She spends much more time visiting missions than she does at the Mother House, but the work of the Generalate does not suffer because she is an indefatigable worker. In whatever province she happens to be if there is more than one mission, for instance Alberta where most of our Sisters work, she travels by car. She does not go anywhere for a predetermined number of days or a predetermined number of interviews. She is there. She sees the work of the mission as it really is. She is available to anyone who wants to talk to her. And she has to be the world's best listener.

Sister Burke has courageously closed many houses, with, of course, the support of her Council. She has also opened many new ones – some with only one sister for the time being. And the missions she has opened have been truly in S.O.S. territory – the Home Missions.

We are in a new, post-Vatican II era. We are seeing a new type of religious life evolve which cherishes all that is good in the old but courageously accepts what is necessary for the new. Surely God's loving care which has been so evident towards the Sisters of Service from our beginning, has never been more evident than when He gave us Patricia Burke as our Sister General.





SISTER STELLA DUBÉ

Sister Stella Dubé died in Toronto on April 10 following years of ill health during most of which she continued working as usual.

For thirty years Sister Dubé worked in our S.O.S. hospitals in Vilna and Edson, Alberta. She was a great nurse and a tremendous worker. She and I were together in Vilna during almost four years without a doctor. We were the only registered nurses on staff and it was a period full of both grim and hilarious episodes. I think it was during that doctorless time that I learned to appreciate the true worth of Sister Dubé. No matter how exhausted she was, she simply could not let you down. She hung in until the job, whatever it was, was finished. When I, who am much bigger and healthier than she ever was, was practically asleep on my feet after 14 or 16 hours of straight duty, she was as perky and alert as if she had just had a long rest.

With seriously ill patients Sister was superb. She was ingenious in finding ways to ease pain and discomfort; no effort was ever too great. I think the proof of this lies in the fact that most of her really ill patients became her lasting friends.

She had a rare love of her family. How well I learned to know Loretta (Mrs. Callings), Ann (Mrs. Bagordo), Margaret (Mrs. LaClair) who was the youngest and a great concern of Sister's after their mother died, and Amable, the only boy in the family. As nephews and nieces arrived we all got to know them too. Because I had neither brothers nor sisters I enjoyed Sister's sharing of her own loved ones, though I did not know them personally.

Sister Dubé was a great Sister of Service. No work was ever beneath her. Whether it was nursing, cooking, painting walls or waxing floors, she tackled everything with vigour and efficiency and most important of all, with tremendous generosity. In the hospital she could fill any post because she was not just a nurse but an excellent X-Ray and Laboratory Technician. She was so bright and interested. She seemed always to be on top of what was going on in her profession, in medicine and in the world. And she could argue, how she could argue to make a point.

On the base of the Celtic cross which marks the graves of the Sisters of Service in Mount Hope cemetery in Toronto these words are engraved: *They Have Served*. It was hard for us to watch Sister Dubé failing; she had always been so vital. I know that none of us, not her family, nor we Sisters of Service would deny her that peace in the Lord which is now hers. Without a moment's hesitation all who knew Sister can say fervently: *You Have Served*.

Our sympathy goes out to her own family who will miss her greatly. But neither they nor we have lost a Sister; she is simply waiting for us to join her. May her dear soul rest in peace.

Now We Are His Voice

WHEN JESUS journeyed up and down the byways and shores of Galilee and Judea, the fishermen dropped their nets on the shore, the farmers in the field threw the reins across the plow, and the women forgot to tend to their cooking at the fireplace – to follow Him. This is the man who walked the roads, the sun bathing Him in perspiration and the earth kicking up the dust into His sandals. The man who greeted people – “Shalom Andrew,” “Shalom Rachel” – smiling, talking, laughing. This is the man who worked for years with rough wood in a hard trade – tough, yet gentle when the children came up to hug Him. Everyone hung spellbound at His message and brought the sick to Him. Why? Because His person radiated the Truth and the Love that He is.

Christ no longer walks the dusty roads of earth. His voice no longer rings among its hillsides.

But He is ALIVE.

He still speaks.

He is still LOVE and TRUTH.

But who listens to the “Big C”?

Perhaps not many. Because we, “the little c’s,” are not becoming *truth* and *love*. And after all –

NOW WE ARE HIS VOICE.

From Rocks Are For Lizards

by John C. Tormey

C c c c c c
C C C C C

Mother Teresa speaks . . .

On Prayer

It is not possible to engage in the direct apostolate without being a soul of prayer. We must be aware of oneness with Christ, as He was aware of oneness with His Father. Our activity is truly apostolic only in so far as we permit Him to work in us and through us, with His power, with His desire, with His love. We must become holy, not because we want to feel holy, but because Christ must be able to live His life fully in us. We are to be all love, all faith, all purity, for the sake of the poor we serve. And once we have learned to seek God and His will, our contacts with the poor will become the means of great sanctity to ourselves and to others.

Love to pray – feel often during the day the need for prayer, and take trouble to pray. Prayer enlarges the heart until it is capable of containing God's gift of Himself. Ask and seek and your heart will grow big enough to receive Him and keep Him as your own.

On Joy

Joy is prayer – Joy is strength – Joy is love – Joy is a net of love by which you can catch souls. God loves a cheerful giver. She gives most who gives with joy. The best way to show our gratitude to God and the people is to accept everything with joy. A joyful heart is the normal result of a heart burning with love. Never let anything so fill you with sorrow as to make you forget the joy of Christ Risen.

We all long for heaven where God is, but we have it in our power to be in heaven with Him right now – to be happy with Him at this very moment. But being happy with Him now means:

loving as He loves,
helping as He helps,
giving as He gives,
serving as He serves,
rescuing as He rescues,
being with Him twenty-four hours,
touching Him in His distressing disguise.

from *Something Beautiful for God*
by MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE



Dreams For Celebration

Today the Lord steps into the air once more to taste its color and feel its songs. He inhales the thoughts of children, the breath of yesterday, the fantasies of tomorrow, and He wonders whether His children are too old to celebrate their dreams.



Let us spin Him our dreams.

Someday soon people will celebrate life every day.

But we would like to do it now, wet and wild and risen with the Lord.

Someday soon people will send up balloons in church

Turn tired old cathedrals into cafeterias

Paint gravestones as bright as the sun

Know they are beautiful, black, red or white

Glimpse the face of God in their patient parents

Use the eyes of friends in place of mirrors

Bounce through the mountains on beachballs

Write their Christian names in the sunset

Become as free as that man called Jesus Christ

Play kickball with cripples in the park

Sing for their supper in asylums

Sink their teeth into politics for peace

Airlift food and life to the starving

Have senses in their soul as sharp as radar

Love a man because he is a man

Grow flowers in their garbage can

Cover their cars with foam rubber

Turn all bombs into boomerangs

All bullets into blanks

And switchblades into tubes of finger paint

Slow down and wait for God

Laugh with the falling spring leaves

Dance in the falling summer snow

Baptize their babies with love before birth

Celebrate Easter as angels do below

And hang Christmas banners from the moon.

Yes, someday soon people will live like that,
but we plan to start right now.

Right now, Lord, right now.

Amen, Lord, right now.

From *Interrobang*
by Norman C. Habel

O God, help us

O God, help us at all times to make our deeds fit our words, and to make our conduct match our profession; and grant that we may never say one thing with our lips and another with our lives.

Grant that we may not praise service and practice selfishness.

Grant that for us sympathy may never only be a thing of the emotions, but that it may always issue in action to help. Grant that, when we feel sorry for someone, we may not be satisfied until we have done something to help.

Grant that we may not praise love and practice bitterness.

Grant that we may not sing the beauty of loving one another, and yet refuse to forgive one another.

Grant that we may not dream of a time of brotherly love, and yet be unable to live at peace with our neighbor.

Grant that we may not praise honesty and practice falsehood.

Grant that we may not be guilty of the hypocrisy which says one thing with its lips and means another in its heart, and which is one thing to a person's face and another behind his back. Grant that we may not pay lip service to the truth, and yet be willing to evade, suppress, or twist the truth, when it suits our purpose to do so.

Grant that we may not praise generosity and practice meanness.

Keep us from the hypocrisy of singing hymns about giving everything to you, and then grudging every penny we give and every hour we devote to the service of your people and your Church.

Keep us, O God, from bringing discredit by our life and our actions, our words and our behavior on the faith which we profess, the Church to which we belong, and the Master whom we ought to serve; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

from Prayers for the Christian Year

by WILLIAM BARCLAY

Editor's note: We thank Lesley Ann's mother for sending this poem to us. If the author could write this when only 14 we hope she has continued writing whatever her present age.

On God

*I can see God.
I can see Him in the dew on a rose-bud,
In the crystal depths of a streamlet,
In a sunny spring morning,
And in a person's smile,
People say God doesn't exist.
If he doesn't, why can I see Him?
I can hear God.
I can hear Him in the song of a meadow lark,
In the cathedral hymn of restless pines,
In the laughter of little children,
And in a kindly spoken word.
If God truly does not live
Why can I hear Him calling to me?
I can feel God.
I can feel Him in the wind in my hair,
In the raindrops splashing on my cheeks,
In the trust of a small animal,
And, most of all – in love.
People say He never was.
Why, then is His hand on my arm to guide me?
And if it ever turns out
That the people were right, and I was wrong
I'll always know this:
I can see, hear, and feel Him,
And nothing can take that away from me.*

LESLEY ANN WOOD
Victoria, B.C.
At age 14

sisters **S** *of* **S** *service*

THE FIELD AT HOME



*'We must keep on lighting
candles to Mary on the
Maytime altar of our souls'*

Karl Rahner



THE FIELD AT HOME

VOLUME XLIX / NUMBER 2 / 1973

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Mary Immaculate

*"Pure as the snow," we say. Ah! never flake
Fell through the air
One-tenth as fair
As Mary's soul was made for Christ's dear sake.
Virgin Immaculate,
The whitest whiteness of the Alpine snows,
Beside thy stainless spirit, dusky grows.*

*"Pure as the stars," Ah! never lovely night
Wore in its diadem
So pure a gem
As that which fills the ages with its light.
Virgin Immaculate,
The peerless splendours of thy soul by far
Outshine the glow of heaven's serenest star.*

ELEANOR C. DONNELLY

MEMO . . . *from the editor's desk*

Although it will be early August before this issue of the **FIELD AT HOME** is delivered to our readers, it was begun in early May. Perhaps the time of year had some influence on the choice of our theme which is Our Lady.

Our Lady seems to have fallen into the background of Catholic devotion in recent years. This certainly is not the mind of the Church nor the mind of Vatican II. The frequent and beautiful references to the Mother of God in the Council documents leave us in no doubt about her place in the Church.

Perhaps the apparent neglect of Mary is a reaction to some of the exaggerated and saccharine treatment to which she was subjected by over-zealous and often misinformed devotees. In fact as your editor searched for material for this issue she was sometimes amused, sometimes repelled by the inane lines which had been written about "a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars." Obviously, with the best of intentions, we had at times attempted to emphasize the approachability, the love, the compassion of Mary not only by usurping for her the place which belongs to her Son, but by investing her with a kind of sugary sweetness which divested her of her inherent grandeur and dignity.

We hope that the excerpts from the Council and from sound theological writings on our Lady will help to make all of us aware that Mary is the beloved Mother of God, of the Church, of you and of me; that Mary has and always will have a prominent place in Catholic theology and life.

We believe we were fortunate in having Sister Denis touch down in Ottawa as she flits from place to place in her work for improving the religious education of the Native People. It gave us the opportunity to interview her on a phase of her work which we believe you will find interesting.

A short visit to Halifax provided another opportunity – a long talk with Sister Bertha Jackson about her summer at Jean Vanier's L'Arche in France. Considering the respect and love with which Canadians regard the Vanier name it is highly probable that most readers will find Sister Jackson's experiences highly interesting.

One of the most rewarding things about editing the **FIELD AT HOME** is the spate of letters which each issue brings to the editor. Your appreciation and good wishes are most gratefully acknowledged. We have been told that ours is no longer an S.O.S. magazine but a Church magazine. We're not sure this was meant as a compliment but, equally, we're not sure that it is a bad thing to be a "Church" magazine since the S.O.S. are definitely part of the Church. Be that as it may, do keep us in your prayers that we may continue to be both – S.O.S. and Church.

MARY'S DAILY FIAT

Every day the Blessed Virgin had to invent a new fiat;
every day, she had to start afresh to discover God in her life
in ways she hadn't at all foreseen.

That's precisely what we have to do.

We never recognize Him;
He always fools us,
and we're always scandalized.

"Blessed is she who has believed."

Well, she who has believed is our mother;
and we'll have no peace,
no security,
till we follow her example
and accept her loving and constant invitation
to become like her,
to become her children.

Far from ever being sorry she's our mother,
she'll continually remind us
that *she* didn't always understand our Lord, either,
but always said "Yes,"
always agreed
and always marveled at Him.

For all eternity, she'll admire the great things God did
in His lowly handmaid.
We, too, must be able to sing the *Magnificat* someday;
for only then shall we go to heaven –
when we finally let ourselves be astonished
by the wonders He'll have worked
in all His ignoble servants.

LOUIS EVELY in *That Man is You*



Devotion to The Blessed Virgin in The Church

MARY WAS INVOLVED in the mysteries of Christ. As the most holy Mother of God she was, after her Son, exalted by divine grace above all angels and men. Hence the Church appropriately honors her with special reverence. Indeed, from most ancient times the Blessed Virgin has been venerated under the title of "God-bearer". In all perils and needs the faithful have fled prayerfully to her protection. Especially after the Council of Ephesus the cult of the People of God toward Mary wonderfully increased in veneration and love, in invocation and imitation, according to her own prophetic words: "All generations shall call me blessed; because He who is mighty has done great things for me" (Lk. 1:48).

As it has always existed in the Church, this cult is altogether special. Still, it differs essentially from the cult of adoration which is offered to the Incarnate Word, as well as to the Father and the Holy Spirit. Yet devotion to Mary is most favorable to this supreme cult. The Church of God has endorsed many forms of piety toward the Mother of God, provided that they were within the limits of sound and orthodox doctrine. These forms have varied according to the circumstances of time and place and have reflected the diversity of native characteristics and temperament among the faithful. While honoring Christ's Mother, these devotions cause her Son to be rightly known, loved and glorified, and all His commands observed. Through Him all things have their being and in Him "it has pleased (the Eternal Father) that . . . all his fullness should dwell" (Col. 1:19).

This most holy Synod deliberately teaches this Catholic doctrine. At the same time, it admonishes all the sons of the Church that the cult, especially the liturgical cult, of the Blessed Virgin, be generously fostered. It charges that practices and exercises of devotion toward her be treasured as recommended by the teaching authority of the Church in the course of centuries, and that those decrees issued in earlier times regarding the veneration of images of Christ, the Blessed Virgin and the saints, be religiously observed.

But this Synod earnestly exhorts theologians and preachers of the divine word that in treating of the unique dignity of the Mother of God, they carefully and equally avoid the falsity of exaggeration on the one hand, and the excess of narrow-mindedness on the other. Pursuing the study of Sacred Scripture, the holy Fathers, the doctors, and liturgies of the Church, and under the guidance of the Church's teaching authority, let them rightly explain the offices and privileges of the Blessed Virgin which are always related to Christ, the Source of all truth, sanctity and piety.

Let them painstakingly guard against any word or deed which could lead separated brethren or anyone else into error regarding the true doctrine of the Church. Let the faithful remember moreover that true devotion consists neither in fruitless and passing emotion, nor in a certain vain credulity. Rather, it proceeds from true faith, by which we are led to know the excellence of the mother of God, and are moved to a filial love toward our Mother and to the imitation of her virtues.

VATICAN II

Dogmatic Constitution on the Church

Mary Our Mediatrix

THE ABSOLUTELY UNIQUE Yes of consent of the Blessed Virgin, which cooperated in determining the whole history of the world, is not a mere happening that has disappeared into the void of the past. It occurred as an event in a personal spiritual history, by grace, and therefore it is – it is eternally. She still utters her eternal Amen, her eternal *Fiat*, Let it be so, Let it be done, to all that God willed, to the whole great ordered plan of redemption, in which we all find place, built up on the foundation which is Christ. She says Amen to it all, because she consented once and for all to Jesus Christ, and because that consent of hers has entered eternity. When God looks upon the one community of the redeemed, and wills each with all the others and because He wills the others, He also looks upon this eternal Yes of the Blessed Virgin, the Yes on which He willed, in this order of creation, the salvation of us all, quite directly and absolutely once and for all, to depend. God, therefore, wills our salvation too, in this view of His of Mary as she is in eternal life.

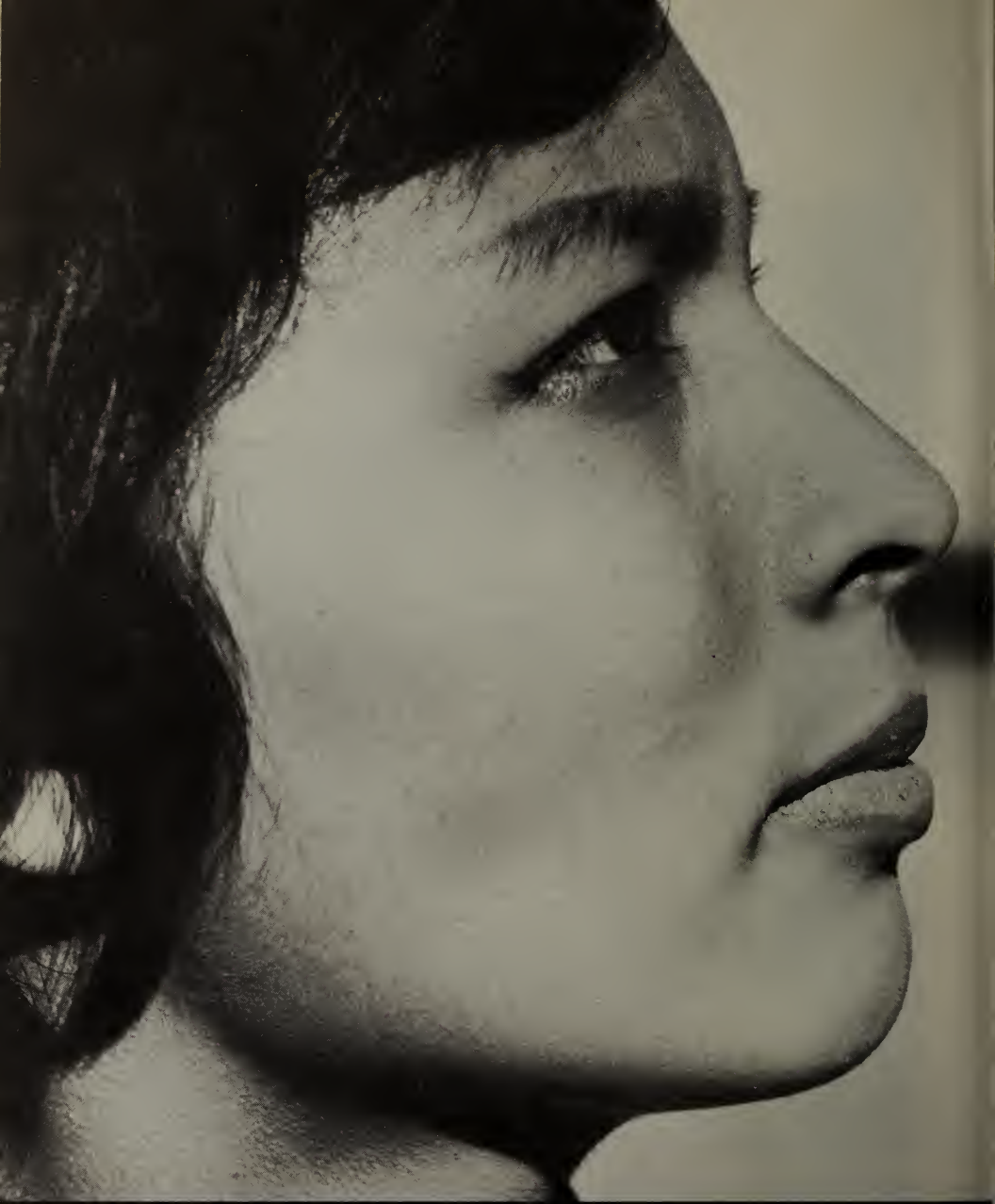
We can quietly trust the average Catholic to grasp in his own way and bear in mind in his religious life, the difference there is between the mediation of Christ, and that of the blessed Virgin. He may be unable to express the difference in well-chosen theological concepts, but he knows it. For he knows, and in his prayer applies the fact, that Mary is a created person who has been favored by grace, and for all the glory of her grace, only a creature. And he knows that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the eternal Word of the Father, to Whom alone in the Father and the Holy Spirit worship is due. The Catholic is so thoroughly convinced of the divine majesty of his one Mediator Jesus Christ that he is more often in danger of overlooking in Jesus the true man Who has the same nature as we have.

So there is no need for us to be nervous, sparing or niggardly when we honor Mary. It is a sign of a truly Catholic life, when there grows to maturity in our hearts, slowly but genuinely, cultivated humbly and faithfully, a personal and tender love of the Blessed Virgin. That is yet another grace that must be prayed for. But since she is the mediatrix who has given us the Lord, since she thereby as intermediary bestows in Him and through Him all grace, the grace He Himself is and the grace He has merited, we must sincerely love and honor her. We must keep on lighting candles on the Maytime altar of our own souls, and the greeting of the angel and Elizabeth in the gospel must rise up in our minds perpetually. "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women; and blessed is the fruit of thy womb!" And we must also repeatedly say: Our Lady, our intercessor, our advocate, reconcile us to your Son, and show us now and after this life, the blessed fruit of your womb; pray for us sinners, now and in the hour of our death. Amen.

KARL RAHNER

in *Mary, Mother of the Lord*





THE BEATITUDE PEOPLE

The following is the result of an interview the editor had with Sister Margaret Denis S.O.S. who, working out of Winnipeg, spent two years researching at first hand the religious education of native people. At present Sister Denis is a staff member of the Canadian Catholic Conference's National Office for Religious Education, and still working in the same area.

THE LONGER SISTER DENIS studied and observed the status of religious education among Native People the more convinced she became of one obvious need: audio-visual aids. The last such visual was Father Lacombe's chart of the late 1800's. Though the chart unfortunately became outdated it should never have been allowed to die.

According to Marshall McLuhan *Indians and Eskimos are the only people of the 21st. century*. The development of the electronic media and the impact of TV are transforming us from book people into audio-visual people. This the Native People have been for centuries; they have always learned best experientially and not from books.

It is difficult to estimate the excitement of a white woman educator who, trying to bring native culture and our own educational methods together, discovers that our intellectual methods are passé. To discover further that what we believe to be our advances with regard to the visual and experiential the Indians have always had and are far ahead of us in this area. The fact that we have at least learned what the native has always known is cause for hope.

It is one thing to recognize the importance of audio-visual aids to education it is another thing to provide them for missionaries who rarely have funds accessible to purchase the required equipment. The most contemporary way of filling the need is with slides. Slides are not the last word, it is true, but until something better is developed they serve very well.

Anyone who knows Sister Denis also knows that where she sees a need she sets out, singlemindedly and dauntlessly, to fill it. So with the slides.

To backtrack a little, Sister Denis' interest in Indians goes back a long way. As a child when visiting her parents' native North Dakota and later when her maternal grandmother lived with the Denis family in Detroit, Sister heard much about her Grandmother Oakey's experience as a teacher on an Indian Reservation. Years later Sister Denis herself taught for seven years in Peace River, Alberta, where two-thirds of her pupils were Metis. She knew the awful frustration which accompanies failure to reach the Metis children. She knows now that her failure was due to her inability, at that time, to see them as other than "white".

Eventually Sister Denis went into the field of religious education for the Archdiocese of Winnipeg. Religious educators, she found, *talked* a great deal about "the Indian problem". Winnipeg decided to *do* something about it.

Through the well-known authority on Native People, Father André Renaud, O.M.I., of the University of Saskatchewan, the Winnipeg religious educators got in touch with Father Roger Vandersteene, O.M.I., a Beligan who had been doing missionary work among the natives in the North for many years and

who has had considerable success in teaching religion. Father Vandersteene visited Winnipeg twice and explained the techniques he had himself evolved. (We will have a later interview with Sister Denis on Vandersteene's techniques.) The Winnipeg religious education team was excited by the vistas opened up by Father Vandersteene, and Sister Denis, because of her interest and because her failure with the Metis still haunted her, undertook to do the necessary research.

There followed for Sister Denis two and half years of travelling back and forth across Canada to visit Indian Reservations; of meetings with native educators; of talking but above all listening to the Native People themselves as they explored, in their own way, educational methods which would be suitable to their culture and needs. And everywhere she went her camera went along.

At first there was no definite plan for the picture-taking. She took what she felt were interesting shots and found that anyone, with a little care, can take good colour pictures. As she learned more about the Indian People her plan developed. She realized that the pictures which speak very well to the natives are those taken in their own habitat. This is extremely realistic because life is lived in our own milieu to which foreign images bear no relation. Native pictures can portray the Christian message in ways which the people can relate to. The educator must try to see as the native sees; this can come only by sensitivity to him.

After about six months, Sister Denis says, she gave up the "I am going to



"I tell you solemnly, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. And so, the one who makes himself as little as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 18:2-4)



"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

help the Native People to become better Christians" attitude. The realization gradually came that the opposite is true; that the Church in Canada will be the richer for listening to her native sons and daughters.

At the end of the first two years and a half, Sister had three thousand slides. The next year was spent sorting and selecting the two hundred with the greatest symbolic value. These two hundred are being published as an aid to religious education. The set, with its two indices, is called "The Beautitude People".

In selecting slides it was important that each picture chosen had three symbolic values at least. For example, roads have great symbolic value to the Indian. Father Lacombe realized this when he developed his chart which depicted a good road and a bad road. Symbolically words of Scripture and/or of the Christian message can be used with slides which show everyday life around the reservations. Thus the pictures do not promise pie in the sky or the white man's religion. The educator makes use, in this way, of the universality of the Christian message, of the Church Herself.

The accompanying indices are aids for the teacher, particularly for the creative teacher who can mix and match. But with or without aids the person and the conviction of the teacher are all important. No program, no aids matter one whit without sensitivity to and respect for the native peoples and their culture. The idea of seeing them as The Beautitude People appeals strongly to Sister Denis. They are people who mourn, who are poor, who hunger and thirst for justice – and Jesus says these people are blessed. They must be approached with this well in mind and, hopefully, both natives and whites will be the richer for an honest and honourable experience of mutual caring and sharing.



Jean Vanier's original house, L'Arche, Trosly-Breuil, France (on left of picture)

A Summer at L'Arche in France

As told by Sister Bertha Jackson to the Editor

SISTER BERTHA JACKSON's long journey from Halifax to Jean Vanier's L'Arche at Trosly-Breuil in France really began at a theology seminar in Halifax. During their discussions about the community life of the early Christians, the students came to the conclusion that Jean Vanier's set-up and work with the retarded probably came closer to the life of the early Christians than any other contemporary effort.

Her interest in L'Arche was heightened when Sister Jackson undertook to help a friend and fellow-student, Brian Jackson, find a place where he could do volunteer work. Sister Ella Deland suggested L'Arche and Brian, who is bilingual, decided to go there for a while. (At this writing he has been there for two years.)

Sister Jackson says: "As I learned more about L'Arche the desire to participate in Christianity as lived by the early Christians became overpowering. In today's changing and much less structured world there is an emphasis on personal responsibility for one's spiritual

fulfillment. I dared wish for this type of experience. I wanted to live this life even for a short time. It was indeed a challenge once I got there."

Student Flight

Because she had been enrolled in a French course at Dalhousie University, Sister Jackson was able to travel on a student flight. Before going to France she sidetracked for a short visit to Holland and a reunion with an old friend who had lived in Edson, Alberta. To her delight she was in Holland for May 5th when "the church bells rang out joyously to celebrate the day the Canadians had liberated Holland during World War II. It was good to be a Canadian."

"My first day in France was May 6th. There I was on a train with everyone speaking French which, apologies to Dalhousie, I found I did not understand too well. But that didn't matter; I was on my way to L'Arche at Trosly-Breuil, Brian Jackson would meet me, I had no problems. Or so I thought. I knew I would change trains once but not twice

so I missed the second transfer.

"Came the moment to try out my Dalhousie French – it worked. The train was filled with working men. When the one sitting beside me learned I was going to Compeigne – the town nearest to Trosly – the excitement began. At the next stop the entire group ushered me off. The next train for my second transfer point was in the station but was not due to leave for two and a half hours. My new-found friends installed me and tropped back to their own train. But how was I to get in touch with Trosly to let them know about the delay? There were no phones anywhere in the vicinity. Mustering up my courage and my French I got off the train and went into the station. The railroad employees were just as kind as the passengers had been. They sent a message by wire and didn't charge for it. I finally arrived at Trosly four hours late and the richer for an exciting day.

Historic City

"Trosly-Breuil is seven miles from Compeigne, an historic city northeast of Paris. It was at Compeigne that Joan of Arc was captured; the city boasts a beautiful monument to her. The Treaty of Versailles was signed at Compeigne and a chateau used by Napoleon III is of

historic interest. The ancient city walls are still partly standing.

"Trosly is a picturesque village set in a valley. The two villages of Trosly and Breuil are divided by a river. Jean Vanier has six houses in Trosly, one in Breuil across the river, one at Pierrefond, four and a half miles away. There are still other houses in France as well as in India, Canada and London, England.

"I stayed at 'La Grande Source'. There are two *responsables* for each house. The *responsables* do more than take charge of a house of course. There is all the work which goes with maintaining the entire community for which they assume part responsibility.

"The retarded, for whom L'Arche exists, and the volunteers work five days a week. Some work in the houses, some in the gardens, some in the *ateliers* or workshops. There are *ateliers* in which heavy paper bags are made, mosaics lamps and other items for which there is a market. Thus boys who could be a burden on society are enabled to support themselves on the proceeds from their own work. In addition, their being given the opportunity to live in a family setting brings out the best in them and prevents the alienation which could easily occur in their cases.

Madame Vanier is greeted by her son in the early morning. A group of boys and assistants in the background.





Boys and assistants on the beach at Ambleteuse during August vacation.

Volunteer Work

"Volunteers work for nothing or for a very nominal allowance. All summer help is donated. In the morning one makes the rounds for individual greetings – a handshake, a pat on the shoulder, a *bon jour*. Breakfast is served at 8 a.m. on week days and consists of *café au lait*, bread and jam. (The French bread is delicious and more substantial than ours.) Dinner is at noon; *gouter*, which we would call a coffee-break I suppose, at four or four-thirty and the evening meal is at 7:30. The assistants remain with the boys until 10 p.m.

"Jean Vanier, when he began this work in 1964, called the first house *L'Arche*. He had two boys. When I was there the community provided care for 120 boys. The philosophy is one of sharing all one's days with the boys, sharing joys and sorrows as in a family. The retarded, aged 18 to 65, provide the centre of the community; the workers make up the outer circle. Each group shares with the other and the community evolves from the apostolate. A commonly used word is *partage* which may be translated as 'sharing'.

"There are assistants there from many countries including Canada and the United States. There were 100 assistants when I was there. Preference is

given to those who wish to give longer service and the prime requisite is a good knowledge of French. I did the mending, which was piled high when I arrived.

"At this time I remained at Trosly for 10 days. Then, in an effort to improve my French, I went to the very old Abbaye de Clermont which was begun in the 12th century by St. Bernard's Cistercians. It has been in ruins since the French Revolution but is gradually being restored and while there I did my bit in the cause of restoration.

"The Abbaye is now owned by two ladies who accept students wanting an environment in which only French is spoken and heard. In exchange, the students help with the work of restoration. I did housework, made beds, washed dishes, painted doors after filling the holes with putty, and helped develop picture postcards. Many tourists visited the Abbaye; when they were English I was the guide. We were called *Benevolants*. I spent a month at the Abbaye which was unfortunately marred by a severe attack of French Grippe. It was an extremely cold place with no fire.

Early To Bed

"Our daily routine was much the same as at L'Arche but as soon as the dishes were done following the evening meal, and the milk cans put out to be picked up by truck very early in the morning, we were supposed to go to bed – mostly because of the cold. It was really only at meals that we had much time for conversation. A week before I was due to leave the Abbaye a friend from Dalhousie University arrived. He was a great help because he drew me into the conversation at meal time and I had more opportunity to practice French.

"Because the Grippe had taken its toll, I felt I should have a rest before re-

turning to L'Arche. And an answer to prayer arrived in the mail. I had met a Danish girl at L'Arche with whom I became friendly. She, Kiersten, had written inviting me to visit her family in Denmark for a week and then make a retreat to be given in English by Jean Vanier. I was delighted and replied by return mail. I had wanted to make one of Vanier's retreats in Canada but most seemed to be in French.

"I enjoyed Denmark. Another girl had joined Kiersten and me. Since none of us had much money, we were content with doing ordinary things. Kiersten's family was delightful and gave us a wonderful day at their summer home. We spent a morning helping at the catechetical centre in Copenhagen. I was pleased when the priest in charge told us that they use the Canadian catechism, *Come to the Father*. I only wish I knew more about religious education at home.

Retreat at Ancient Chateau

"We were to make our retreat at Sottrup. The six-hour trip from Copenhagen was marvelous. We travelled by train, boat and bus; the boat trip took two and a half hours. The retreat was being given at an ancient chateau which is surrounded by a moat and reached by bridges. It is now a guest house run by German sisters. The scenery was magnificent.

"Jean Vanier's retreat was on the Beatitudes in the context of contemporary life. He described his own experience in the ghettos of the U.S.A., among the poor in India; with youth in Poland; with the ill in psychiatric hospitals; with prisoners, and his work at L'Arche. We had three conferences daily, then divided into small groups for discussion and prayer. Because the weather remained beautiful we had our group meetings outdoors. There were two dining rooms,

one for those who wished to talk and the other for those preferring silence. Jean Vanier usually ate in the latter. He strongly recommends recollection.

"There were people from all walks of life on retreat, even a self-styled 'hobo'. At the end, a married couple most hospitably took Kiersten and me to their home for dinner then drove us to Arrhus to catch a train for Paris. When the train stopped at Hamburg we decided to have a 'hamburger' for our evening meal. It turned out to be half of a fried chicken — unexpected but very good. Since Jean Vanier travelled by the same train and had a car waiting for him in Paris, we got a drive back to Trosly. Now, at last, I felt I really was at L'Arche. I remained until my return to Canada in August.

"I lived at La Grande Source, sharing a room with a girl from London, Ontario. I had a bed, a bedside table, a lamp but no chair. We shared a cupboard with one drawer each. The house had recently been finished and our room



Sister Jackson and Kiersten with the Copenhagen harbor as background.

was part of the former attic. Most of the boys have a private room as do the *responsables*, but the latter's rooms are used for many things.

'Sharing' the Key Word

"The entire L'Arche project was conceived as a spiritual renewal. Sharing is the key word. The whole experience is a challenge. Sometimes it is a solitary experience in which sharing is merely the written expression of what one is doing at the time. Sometimes it is actual sharing with others.

Despite the stimulation and the satisfaction granted to me, I would not attempt to analyse the experience for others. Anyone I know who has been there feels the same way. Who can adequately relate what takes place in a deep meeting with oneself?

"When Jean Vanier is present he holds a sharing, a *partage* on Sunday at 10:30. It is held at Emmanuel where the chapel is in the next room. Emmanuel is a place of solace where silence is observed at all times except during a service. After reflective readings from the Bible there is Mass at 11:15. Once a month the Mass is at Breuil – a two-mile walk from Trosly.

"There are good things going on all the time at L'Arche. Besides the boys with whom we spend our time and for whom the work is geared, other persons come continually. *Partages* are arranged. Co-workers returning from other missions describe their experiences. Every evening in every house, after the dishes are done, there is a prayer meeting. At the Grande Source we had our prayer meetings in the dining room, the only room we had. All are invited but attendance is not compulsory. As a rule there is a short reading from the New Testament but the prayer is spontaneous. Personal prayers for others or special re-

quests may be mentioned; a prayer may be said or a hymn started by anyone so inclined. The special L'Arche prayer is said sometime during the meeting. The boys take part and their praying is surprisingly beautiful.

Beloved Canadian Lady

"Madame Pauline Vanier, that beloved Canadian lady, was at L'Arche with her son while I was there. I had coffee with her one day. She so easily and readily understood how different everything was for me, an English-speaking Canadian. We enjoyed some good laughs together.

"During August all the boys go somewhere away from Trosly-Breuil for holidays. Those who have homes spend some time there. The others are divided into three groups. I went to Ambleuse, to a place given to Jean Vanier by a friend of his father.

"My own work at L'Arche was sewing and mending. We mended until one wondered how the garments would hold together. The patches didn't have to match and seldom did. The boys loved to see if I was mending one of their garments.

"The boys are marvellous. Although I could not always understand the French, we got along famously. But they can get angry. They have to be treated like adults, not children.

"I would have needed more French to remain there. I knew that when I went but thought I might never get there if I waited to become proficient. My trip culminated in a happy combination of joys and sorrows shared with others. It was a deeply spiritual experience. In my dictionary of terms, anything is spiritual which results in an outpouring of the Spirit and continues in an outpouring of love, whether it be the result of deep meditation or evolves from an encounter with others."

What Jesus Learned

... ALL THE FILIAL OBEDIENCE of Jesus is summed up in His Pasion, by which salvation is affected. He had practiced it throughout his life and, by this very practice, He had humanly better understood and deepened it. He had been trained by His parents and He had learned it from them, just as He had learned from them, and from His teachers, and from His Jewish background, love and respect for the Temple, religious and other basic acts, prayer, the Psalms, the primary import of Passover and of the feasts which, by witness of St. John, He was to make the context of so much teaching, of so many messianic acts.



In this way, the human feelings, the dispositions of heart and of will, by means of which Jesus effected our salvation, had gradually been formed in His experience as a young Jew, and in his education at Nazareth by Mary and Joseph.

This had been an education to prayer, to love for God, to obedience toward Him. But, actually, the great religious attitudes, all of them simple and profound, are prefigured in the attitudes which we acquire toward our parents and our relatives, toward other men, and also toward the homeland whose heritage we must accept and honour. The Jewish rabbis used to say that the fifth commandment (our fourth), the one which commands us to honour our father and our mother, had been written on the first tablet of the Law because the Love and respect which we give to our parents is still love and respect to God. St. Paul was to say that disobedience and lack of respect toward parents were characteristic of a world which is pagan or which has once more become pagan.

The submission of Jesus to His parents is the sole trait by which St. Luke, who brought together the memories which Mary had stored up in her heart, describes the years during which Jesus grew up and received His training (Lk. 2:51). We are familiar with the technique of ancient authors, who, in telling of the life of their hero, were interested only in those facts which bore a relationship to his mission or public destiny. They did not look, as we tend to do today, for minute details and curious incidents, but for the signs which were an indication of the great destiny to come. What St. Luke is writing is a sacred history; only that is retained which is relevant to the salvific mission of Christ. This point is crucial. Jesus learned obedience, not only through what He suffered, as the Letter to the Hebrews (5:8) tells us, but also from His life as a child in His home at Nazareth. It was by the practice of the fourth commandment that Jesus began, in His human soul, the practice of filial obedience which He had to give to His heavenly Father. It was this which began the formation in Him of the sentiments and the attitudes by which, in His Passion, He effected our salvation.

YVES CONGAR
in Jesus Christ

sisters SOS *service*

THE FIELD AT HOME

**There have always been men
who make their light shine.
And the light always shines.**

Malcolm Muggeridge

THE FIELD AT HOME

VOLUME XLIX / NUMBER 3 / 1973

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MEMO . . . *from the editor's desk*

The editor is still metaphorically rubbing her eyes and pinching herself to see if she is awake. There was an absolute windfall of material for this issue. I seriously doubt that this has ever happened before. I am most grateful to the authors of the articles appearing here. A word about them seems to be in order.

Sister Rosemarie Hudon, who teaches theology in Corner Brook, Newfoundland, has not appeared in these pages for a long time. During a telephone conversation in August I asked her to write something about her work in Newfoundland. She said she had thought about it but did not know whether or not I would be interested. Ha! Well, she didn't write about Newfoundland but about our national anthem. Perhaps she has the gift of prophecy. Since the Quebecers, God bless them, have said we'll remain Canadians, thank you, Sister Hudon's piece is timely – at least, to her and to me who are both Québécoise.

Margaret West is a sociologist who is interested in the S.O.S. During a vacation in the North this past summer she visited Teslin and told me she would do an article. I am sure our readers will find it interesting and may even heed the call to go north sometime for a vacation.

The article about St. John's is, I suspect, a more or less community effort which is why it is not credited to any one person. Now if the people in Northwest River, Labrador, will take the hint we may just hear about their work in that missionary area.

Sister Vera Gallagher has had many articles published. It was very generous of her to think of THE FIELD AT HOME and to write the account of what must have been a beautiful, beautiful trip. I can't resist mentioning, however, that there are no Americans or Canadians as biased toward their countries as those who have voluntarily become citizens.

Now for the increasingly familiar apology from the editor for being late. This time it was not a dearth of material, it was simply a dearth of time. I can promise, though, that there will be another issue before the end of 1973. The shower of articles has not been exhausted in this one, so we're off to a head start for the next.

★ ★ ★

Recently I came across a paperback publication of the CBC. It is called *Science & Conscience* and is the transcripts of eight panel discussions on CBC TV in 1968. It covers such topics as: Does science have a conscience?; genetic engineering in the sense of building better babies; racial superiority – is there such a thing?; the bomb – whose responsibility?; mercy killing, etc. It is easy to read and contains information that I think every informed Christian should have. I imagine it can be bought at any good bookstore or, possibly, through the CBC. I recommend it. If we don't know anything about the problems and the options facing us, how can we do our bit in finding solutions?



God Keep Our Land

AT HOLY MASS THIS MORNING the priest gave us a beautiful introduction to the Prayers of the Faithful. Because it is Labour Day it was a moving plea for prayers and sacrifices for Canada.

I wanted to ask the organist to play *O Canada* at the recessional but our new hymn books were in the sacristy and, I am ashamed to admit, I was not sure of the new changes in wording that have been approved by Parliament. However, by Vespers time we were better prepared and sang our national anthem with great fervour in both English and French.

As might be expected several of us were moving about the house for some time afterwards humming *O Canada* in various keys and pitches. My own humming brought back to me a pleasant episode of the late twenties.

I was in Montreal at the time. The C. W. L. had invited our class to the Windsor Hotel to hear two lectures, one on French, the other on English Canadian Literature. I have a suspicion that we were intended to fill up vacant chairs – just in case. I really had no idea what I was letting myself in for but once there, we saw no reason to think that we were being obliging to the C. W. L. because the place was crowded. Seats were hard to find, some of us ended up on the window sills.

I was surprised and delighted to see that one of the speakers was Canon Emile Chartier. His task was rather heavy – speaking in English of French Canadian Literature. As usual, he managed both to instruct and entertain while constantly holding the full attention of the audience. He ended by introducing the next speaker, a distinguished looking, white haired gentleman who had been listening to him with obvious approval.

The name Stanley Weir meant nothing to me then but Canon Chartier informed us that he was the writer of the English version of *O Canada*. The somewhat frail looking man proceeded to address us in a surprisingly strong voice, he even sang snatches of French Canadian folk songs. He told us that his friendship with Sir Adolphe Routhier had led to his contribution to our national anthem. Archbishop Routhier says that the composition was never intended to be such.

The new *Catholic Book of Worship* certainly bears this out by the dates given: Calixa Lavallée, music, 1842-91; Adolphe Routhier, French lyrics, 1882; Stanley Weir, English lyrics, 1908. If we may call it an accident that the three came together, it was a happy one for Canada . . . Mr. Adolphe Routhier, LL.D., C.R., grandson of the writer makes the dating far more precise. He says that it all began a few weeks before the feast of St-Jean Baptiste in June 1880 when Sir Adolphe was visiting his friend Calixa Lavallée on rue Couillard, in Quebec City. Mr. Lavallée played on the piano his newly composed *grand air* or *marche heroïque*. As is quite evident, Sir Adolphe was musically sensitive, especially for *la grande musique*. The melody inflamed his imagination and channeled it towards religious and patriotic thoughts. The four verses of *O Canada* were written that same night.

A special committee of the Société St-Jean Baptiste had long been searching for a song or canticle to be used on special occasions such as the coming feast. Having read Routhier's verses, the then Lieutenant Governor Robitaille commissioned Lavallée to compose an appropriate musical accompaniment. Since, unknown to the Governor the music had actually preceded the words, the French version of *O Canada* was ready to make its debut at the St-Jean Baptiste celebrations of 1880.

The lyrics of Stanley Weir are not a translation of the French, but were adapted to Lavallée's music, and his admiration for the anthem made Weir hope that the addition of the English verses would cause the whole to be accepted, as indeed it was, as Canada's official national anthem.

When the versions were approved by Parliament in 1972 no changes were made in the French version. Its patriotism already had religious overtones. Those S.O.S. who have worked in the Archdiocese of Grouard have a further interest in the fact that our Archbishop Routhier is another grandson of the writer.

I went to the sacristy this afternoon firmly resolved to take up the new hymn book and memorize the changes in Hymn No. 439. I am determined never again to be caught in uncertainty about our national anthem as I was this morning.

I have a feeling that the Stanley Weir I admired so many years ago would give willing approval to the legislated changes in the wording. The addition of "From far and wide" reminds us that Canada now indeed stretches undivided from sea to sea, while in 1908 Newfoundland had not yet joined Confederation. The concern he ever showed for the unity of Canada leaves no doubt that he would join with fervour in our sung prayer "God keep our land".



Nisutlin Bay Bridge, Mile 803, Alaska Highway (1917 feet) crossing Nisutlin arm of Teslin Lake. The point of land to the left of the bridge is the settlement of Teslin.

MARGARET WEST

Place Moccasins Outside the Door

TESLIN, YUKON, IS A SMALL northern community located approximately 100 miles from Whitehorse on the Alaska Highway. It is picturesquely situated at the junction of Teslin Lake and Nisutlin Bay. Nestled among the birch and spruce trees the thriving community of 318 residents boasts of a Catholic Mission, an Anglican Mission, a Ministry of Transport Communications base, an RCMP detachment, a Yukon Forestry Service base, an Indian Village, a modern Health Centre, two motels, a school and a trading post. The economic resources of the community consist of lumbering, fishing and trapping.

Community activities are numerous and diversified. The residents have formed a community club which has been responsible for the erection and

operation of a hall for dances and movies, a curling rink (two sheets of ice), a skating rink and a swimming pool. Their present project is the erection of a village museum with the aid of a government grant. A branch of the Canadian Legion and the Women's Institute complement the recreational activities of the Community Club. For the last few summers the Community Club has employed a student to provide organized recreational activities for the children. During the writer's short, three-day stay in Teslin the children were involved in daily swimming lessons for various Red Cross badges. Throughout the year the Community Club rents current movies and a nominal fee is charged to offset the rental cost. Volunteers operate the projector.

Typical of the North, the community is supplied with electrical power by a diesel electric plant. The present capacity of the plant is 500 KW. Its operation requires one full time engineer and a part time helper. The pride of the engineer in his work is evidenced by the spic and span cleanliness of the motors and the building housing them.

Firefighting for the community is provided by a volunteer force. When the siren goes all members of the force stop their work and rush to the fire. While I was in Teslin the smoking of fish set fire to a smoke house. Fortunately, the fire was extinguished by the time the volunteer fire brigade arrived but one could feel the deep concern until the nature of the fire was known.

Water for the community is provided by a variety of sources. Some of the community is serviced by individual wells whereas others, unable to afford this, resort to hauling water from the still unpolluted waters surrounding Teslin. Some do this with pails while others do it by filling 500 gallon drums. These drums are hauled daily down to the lake on a trailer, filled, hauled back to the houses and connected to an intricate system of pipes which provide the residents with running water.

Communication with the outside community is maintained via CBC radio and the mail delivery of either the *Whitehorse Star* or the *Yukon News*. Television is as yet unavailable.

Transportation, other than by private car, is provided by the local intercity bus line. Prospective passengers must rise at five o'clock in order to travel to Whitehorse for either shopping or business. The Nisutlin Trading Post provides essential groceries and supplies, as well as post office services to the community.

The Catholic Mission

The Catholic Mission is served by Father J. P. Tanguay, O.M.I. and is architecturally unique. Built in 1970 on the site of the original mission the new building

was designed to encompass the natural history of the area. Father Tanguay describes the Mission as:

Indians, mountains, forests, like the 'Three Aces' spell out realities and landmarks so closely associated with the name of Teslin as to give 3D vision of the little village . . .

The modified teepee strikes the Indian note in honor of the Tlingits accounting for a great number of the local population; the three peaks: church, porch, bell tower, point out to all the mountains of the region, more directly to the gracious 'Three Aces'; the delta shape of the roof delineates the outline of one of them.

Finally, the log cabin siding inside and outside show that even the Lord does not mind staying in a log cabin or in a tent; in fact, the tabernacle of the Real Presence is a glowing copper and brass teepee.¹

Expanding upon this description the writer found it interesting to note that the altar cloths and wall decorations continue the Indian motif. Father Tanguay also follows the Indian custom of hanging a pair of miniature moccasins on the tabernacle to show that Jesus is present, is "at home".

The Health Centre

The Health Centre is operated by the Department of National Health and Welfare – Northern Region. It consists of a double Atco trailer unit, one half containing the clinic the other half the nurse's residence. This is where Sister Mary Halder, S.O.S., hangs her hat and services the area through home visits and the operation of the clinic. Since there is no doctor in the vicinity monthly clinics are organized in liaison with a group of four doctors in Whitehorse, and the residents are notified of their dates through

¹ *A History of the Settlement of Teslin, Teslin Women's Institute, Teslin, Y.T., 1970, p. 13.*

radio broadcasts. During Sister Halder's absences the RCMP respond to emergencies in liaison with the physicians in Whitehorse.

The Indian Cemetery

Near the Village, on a site overlooking the water, is a small Indian cemetery. Of particular interest to the writer were the headstones topped with various animal figures. These figures are beautifully carved from stone. Upon inquiring about this I found that the animals are representative of the tribal lineage of the various Tlingit Indians who have died. Some graves are simply marked with wooden crosses. Each grave is surrounded with a fence to prevent damage by wild animals.

Teslin Craftsmen

Throughout the year koffee-klatching, curling, pleasure boating and other indoor and outdoor activities are a part of the individual's daily life. But the harshness of the winter when the thermometer drops to 30 and 40 degrees below zero calls for additional forms of activities. The Tlingit Indians have preserved their ancient art of snowshoe-making to occupy these months. The snowshoes differ from the beavertail and bearpaw design so popular in other parts of Canada. The Teslin snowshoe is long and narrow with a well pronounced curved front end. Their lightness makes them a pleasure to wear. Other crafts centre around wood carving, beadwork and leathercraft.

The Order of Good Cheer (Sister Halder style)

Teslin, while being primarily a community of married couples does, through employment opportunities, bring single people into the area. These individuals are warmly received but there are times when their single status causes them to be alone. One such time occurs during the evening meal hour. Shortly after her arrival Sister Halder noticed this and conceived the idea that this time could



*Immaculate Heart of Mary Church,
Teslin, Yukon*

be shared. Thus, through a joint evening meal the individuals could come together and if they wished share their day to day experiences. Since Sister Halder had the largest kitchen and other facilities it was natural that her residence would become the focal point. Each member of the group shares in the various roles of meal preparation, clean up and purchase of groceries. Participating members in the group are Father Tanguay, Sister Halder, a young RCMP constable and two teachers.

Summary

In this article, I have attempted to briefly describe the points of interest that caught my attention during a too short visit to Teslin. It is not an elaboration of life styles but rather a description of how the community and its setting impressed me. To this end, I must mention the small gardens that many plant to supplement their food supply, the picking and preserving of wild berries, the freezing of lake trout and the making of clear amber birch wine. There is also the untold beauty of the Northern sunsets as viewed from Lake Teslin and the miles of undisturbed beach where driftwood abounds and loons continue to fish close to shore. Last, but not least, there are the Northern people with their warm, friendly, energetic and hospitable love of life.

Change Comes to the S.O.S. in St. John's

IN SEPTEMBER 1953, we, Sisters of Service, accepted the invitation of Archbishop P. J. Skinner of St. John's, Newfoundland, to participate in the Social Welfare Program which was being introduced at that time.

They were to operate a Girl's Residence, which would serve as a *transitional* Centre for young girls coming into the city to work or to enlarge or upgrade their education through vocational and technical training. The Residence has never been thought of as a permanent place to live since most young girls, after a period of adjustment to living away from home, will eventually evolve plans to live independently. Attempts have always been made to establish and maintain follow-up contacts with former residents, and programs have been offered to former residents within the total program framework.

A Residence cannot be self-support-

ing, much less pay for itself unless it is serving a large number of residents. Hence in the fall of 1955, a group of women were asked to form an Auxiliary to assist the Sisters of Service in their program of social, recreational, educational and spiritual activities in Newfoundland.

Most Grateful

During the past summer the Sisters of Service said "Thank you" to this wonderful group of women who have made up their Auxiliary for the past eighteen years; to those who organized and supported the many and varied social activities and who have displayed such generosity on every occasion. The Sisters are most grateful for the friends they have made through their association with the Auxiliary.

The Sisters recognized the marvellous work done by their Auxiliary through a tangible contribution to the welfare ser-

Left to right: Sister Nora FitzPatrick, who started the Auxiliary when she was Superior in St. John's; Miss A. Murphy, Auxiliary President; Sister Viola Mossey, present Superior; and Mrs. J. Gibbs, first President of the Auxiliary





A luncheon at the Colonial Inn, St. John's, to honor the past and present executive of the Auxiliary

vices of the Archdiocese. It was with deep regret that we reached a decision to close the Girls Residence at 7 Garrison Hill, on June 30, 1973. The decision was reached after much consultation and assessment of personnel and resources.

Change is bound to fill us with mixed feelings. It is a human reaction to feel sad when something in which we have invested a great deal of ourselves terminates . . . and we ask ourselves "Why?" This is not an indication of failure but of the changing society in which we live. Twenty years ago the needs of the young girl coming into the city could very easily be provided by the homelike atmosphere of the Residence at 7 Garrison Hill . . . where the Sisters have always been available and concerned for the welfare of those living there.

Specialized Need

The basic needs of human beings are always the same, but today, in this age of specialization, there is a greater need for a specialized type of Residence. One of the main objectives of such a residence would be to help youngsters coming from institutions, hospitals and treatment centres to adapt to community living. The Sisters of Service at the present time are not able to become actively involved in this specialized type of service.

Sister Bryden will leave St. John's, after seventeen years at the Residence, to become a staff member of the Grenfell Mission in Labrador.

What about the future of the Auxiliary? We hope that these dedicated and generous women will continue to work with us and become involved in the developing social welfare program. These are exciting times. It is good to be alive, to be able to serve the Church, the country and the world when some of the most far-reaching history of mankind is being made.

Petty Harbour, Newfoundland, where one of the Sisters is teaching





A Mass of Thanksgiving at the Basilica for the work accomplished at the S.O.S. Residence. Archbishop J. P. Skinner is the principal celebrant

All of us hesitate to become involved in a commitment which demands much of us. The fact is, that we are already *committed*. We have received a mandate by Baptism to teach, to minister and to lead, in the name of Christ. It is the laity's task to make Christ live in the world. They must bring Him into the Major SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS . . . FAMILY LIFE, EDUCATION, RECREATION, economic and political affairs, and they have a special role to fill in the realm of religious affairs. The layman must see the world as a whole and he must see himself in the context of the world and the Church.

Women have their part to play not only in civic and political life, but in

the Church today. Vatican Council II declared "Since in our times women have an ever more active share in the whole life of society, it is very important that they participate more widely in the various fields of the Church's Apostolate. The Church needs the particular talents and abilities of women today in a way she has never needed them before, in all her history. This is the time when Christian women must enter the mainstream of social, political, and economic life and assume a more active role in the Apostolic work of the Church."

It is our hope that some of the Auxiliary Members will accept this challenge and become actively involved in these areas of service.



Sister Alena Bryden, who spent 17 years in St. John's; Philomena Hickey, one of the first group of girls in the Residence; Sister Nora FitzPatrick



Sister Marie MacDougall, taken outside the High Level, Alberta, Public School

Sister Vera Gallagher, R.G.S.

S.O.S. Odyssey

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 27, Sisters E. Gallagher and M. MacDougall, Sisters of Service, accompanied by myself, Sister Vera Gallagher, Good Shepherd Sister, started off on a long and delightful trek: a trip by car from the S.O.S. mission in High Level, far northern Alberta, to Camp Morton, Manitoba, due to arrive sometime before July 7. Because this drive had a specific S.O.S. flavor, I have given it the title above.

The first project was to photograph Sister MacDougall before High Level's public school where she teaches Grade One. Although Sister is over retirement age, she is continued by the school because she is a resource person for the district. Young teachers are sent to Sister MacDougall's room to observe her teaching methods.

Each day's trip began with a decade of the rosary led by Sister MacDougall. Then the hours were interspersed with S.O.S. stories expertly told and swapped by Sisters Gallagher and MacDougall (with the latter taking a pleasant nap whenever she was so disposed); observations and exchanges of international information; frequent cups of tea; many clicks of the camera; and much laughter.

Rough Roads

The first thirty miles of travel were rough due to extensive road-building; it looked as though a paved road was being constructed all the way into High Level. The signs were something else: one sign would say, "Resume normal speed," and a few steps farther we'd read, "Slow down." Sometimes the flagman was diffi-

Sister Reinhardt's pupils at Hawk Hills School. The editor thinks she can see Sister standing in front of the blackboard





This trailer spells home to Sisters Donnelly and Reinhardt. They spend the week at Hawk Hills and join the S.O.S. community in Manning on weekends

cult to detect; we located one stretched across the road asleep, and another seated in the middle of the highway studying a college text. Every now and then a "Bump" sign would appear on a perfectly smooth surface – and then we'd hit a rough spot without warning.

For hundreds and hundreds of miles we drove through densely forested land with seldom a sign of habitation. Along the roadside sprouted millions of fragrant pink Alberta wild roses. Now and then we came across extensive reforestation programs, with young trees sprouting to take the place of those cut down by loggers. Several beautiful rivers and streams babbled along our route.

We stopped briefly at Hawk Hills Public School, a small, two-roomed rural school taught by Sisters Reinhardt and Donnelly, S.O.S. The children were pictures: pink, scrubbed, combed, curled, neatly dressed, and unbelievably polite. The Sisters explained that all Catholic families in the neighborhood sent their children to this school, while others had theirs attend the town consolidated school. Sister MacDougall met students there who were the children of her former students at the S.O.S. mission in Manning. The Sisters use a small trailer for their habitation, spending the weekends in their mission at Manning.

As we drove, we noticed the fields and

fields of rape, a fairly short, yellow-flowered grass. Cooking oil is made from rape; and from the oil, margarine. We noticed huge rape fields throughout Alberta.

Delicious Lunch at Manning

For our first day's lunch we arrived at the Sisters of Service in Manning around noon. Sister MacDougall told us she had taught in Manning for eleven years. Meantime Sister Green whipped up a delicious meal. Here we met up again with Sister Morgan who had left High Level a few days earlier. And I saw a large room with all four walls covered with first-rate art painted by Sister Green. Sister gives free art lessons to pupils of any religion, provided they purchase their own supplies. In between, she teaches music, and volunteers for the canteen one day a week at the hospital. There also I was introduced to Sister Harding who nurses in the hospital, and Sister MacLellan who teaches grade school at Rosary. The Sisters from High Level and Manning talked as fast as possible to exchange as much news as they could in the shortest time.

Every few miles in Alberta signs indicate a camping ground with trees, a lodge, and facilities. Occasionally we turned in at these campgrounds for a brief rest, a drink of tea, and some of the delicious lunch which lasted us almost all the way across Canada (consist-



The comfortable living room in Manning with several of Sister Green's paintings adorning the walls

ing of fruit, crackers, cheese, celery and carrot sticks.) At short intervals, also, a sign indicating litter disposal would appear and a few feet detour around the highway led to a garbage can.

I was fascinated by the regularity and novelty of the garbage cans. In the mountains these were held above ground by chains to discourage bears; in Manitoba they were designed like little satellites.

Alberta has banned highway advertising so there were no billboards in this province to spoil nature's beauty.

In beautiful Peace River – and it is gorgeous, totally unpolluted country – we stopped at the S.O.S. house and were greeted by Sister Rita Sullivan. Sister was delighted to have us for dinner, and she asked the Sisters to drive from the hospital an elderly Oblate Father who had been seriously injured in a car accident to share the evening with us. Father enjoyed this tremendously and did most of the talking, so the Sisters stayed up that night chatting until they fell asleep in their chairs. Sister Sullivan nurses in the hospital and is alone in this mission, so she enjoyed every speck of news.

A Legend Preserved

As we left next morning, we drove to the big statue of 12-Foot Davis, a legendary miner who found gold in the district, loved Peace River, and never locked his door. He asked to be buried on top of the tallest hill overlooking Peace River and there, from a particular angle, we could make out the fence around 12-Foot's grave on the peak. The Davis of the statue holds a pan for gold, with shovels and a broken key at his feet.

Driving through the lovely, hilly, forested country with huge wheatfields cleared by early homesteaders, we chuckled over the previous evening's experiences. Sister MacDougall fell asleep just as Father Paquin told us about his visit with the newly appointed Bishop. The story was concluded when Sister suddenly woke up. In order to appear



In the mountains the litter bins are hung above ground to discourage bears

very alert, she decided to pop an intelligent question: "Have you met the Bishop yet, Father?" she asked.

We enjoyed lunch in a picnic area, then went on to the new hospital operated by the Sisters of Service in Edson, arriving around three in the afternoon. Having been shown into lovely rooms, all three promptly fell asleep.

I awoke in time for a delightful barbecue supper arranged by the Sisters for their employees. There I met Sister Schafhauser who is going to High Level in the fall. Sister is a nurse, and wants to gain experience in the experimental Community Health Centre just built in High Level: there are only 15 beds because patients will be rapidly returned to their homes to which nurses go, showing families how to take care of the patient; this is the second of its kind in Alberta. There are three advantages: people recover more quickly in their own homes when given proper nursing care; Indians know little about illnesses and can learn in this way how to tend the members of their own family; home care is much less expensive.

At the barbecue I met Sister Reansbury, administrator; Sister Guest, a former superior-general; Sisters Knopic, Allen, Daley, Graf and LaMothe.



The travellers arrive in Edson in time for a barbecue for the hospital staff. Sister Knopis is officiating at the punch bowl

Later that evening we watched Watergate on TV. In the course of my visit I noted several interesting aspects of TV.

While Watergate may be the greatest tragedy ever to hit the U.S. (although some call it the greatest benefit because it is bringing so much concealed corruption into the open), I found Canadians in general more upset and more anxious about Watergate than are the Americans I know. We're angry about it – but Americans have never respected authority much. The country was born in Revolution, and politicians have generally been suspect; we are not nearly so distressed as our friends. I heard many people laugh over Art Buchwald's observation: "Watergate TV proved that *somebody* is telling the truth and the investigations ought to go on until we find who that somebody is; that man is a danger to the country." I'm not sure Canadians would even find that funny.*

We'll Overcome

The American people's power of recuperation is great and proven, and we inherently know we'll overcome this crisis, too. We air the present scandal on TV because in a democracy the people must know an evil before they can cor-

* Americans have no monopoly on crooked politicians but Canadians have a powerful deterrent in our parliamentary system.

Funny, we frequently suspect that Americans lack a sense of humor. – Editor

rect it. And we are a nation in which parties can fight bitterly (as our national elections prove), make a decision, and then walk off arm in arm. Because of our background, we feel safer amidst our turmoils than do those observing us. Along the way, I picked up Canadian magazines and papers to read Letters to the Editor since they are an index of people's concerns. Many letters objected to U.S. advertising on TV – one letter saying Canadian firms pay U.S. TV stations just across the border to advertise their products since the program reaches Canadians. They also complained about the poor quality of some of our TV shows (with which I am in deep agreement). But I saw cable TV as a going thing in Canada – and it's used primarily to get American stations, loaded with American commercials. The same magazines' ads were almost all for products of American firms manufactured in Canada – with most of the profits ending in the States. I wondered why Canadians were not buying out a few American companies while our stock markets were so low, or why they don't direct their energies to inventing their products and their own quality TV shows.

From Edson we drove to beautiful Jasper, arriving there around noon. From thence, we drove in awe of the natural wonders greeting us on every



Beautiful Jasper where a small church thrusts its steeple and cross into the sky

side. And we saw many wild animals along the highway: bears, deer, elk and moose. We stopped at Lake Louise to drink in the gorgeous loveliness of the scene, remembering that I had last stood there as a child with my mother and father as well as my sister. We proceeded to Banff where we had engaged a Scratch cottage.

A Scratch cottage is a small red hut with a beautiful view, three cots, a fireplace, a hot-plate, and a few dishes. It would be suitable for a family doing its own cooking, but it's very bare. Sister Gallagher decided one night there would be enough.

We attended the Saturday night Mass in the Banff Catholic Church, an architectural gem, and were impressed by the crowds of vacationers present. Their years of generosity were apparent in the tastefully designed church.

Next day we went swimming in the mineral hot springs. Sister MacDougall and I got so relaxed thereby that we plopped onto the beds of our pleasant motel suite and conked out. No more sightseeing for us.

We drove through our birthplace, Calgary, surprised by its tremendous growth; and then headed for the little village of Beiseker where Sister Gallagher and I grew up. It was our first trip back in thirty-seven years.

We stayed with a farm family, the Joe

Bosch's, with whom we had maintained a close friendship. Joe drove us around to the location of the two-roomed school where our parents had taught and where we were educated, through the little village, and to the homes of a former long-time acquaintance. The farmer prairie people seemed to have grown more friendly, more sincere, more deeply religious than we, in our youth, had realized. It was wonderful and rejuvenating to be with them again.

Round-the-World Trip

The Bosch's had made a round-the-world trip and shared some of their slides with us. They showed us about their farm which Joe had converted into a ranch. We had a glorious, never-to-be forgotten visit.

Our next stop was at Medicine Hat. Along the way were hundreds of capped oil wells; the Hat is known as the "oil city."

On our way to Regina we passed ranches rather than farms, with more and more oil wells. Billboards dotted both the Saskatchewan and Manitoba highways, and the picnic grounds appeared at only much greater intervals; moreover, they lacked the shady trees of Alberta locations. I bought a milkshake, finding it very thin and tasteless compared to ours – but the banana splits were great!



"We drove in awe of the natural wonders greeting us on every side"

We stayed a couple of days at the S.O.S. religious correspondence school in Regina, and the Sisters showed me their work and materials. We met Sisters Walsh, MacMillan, Fitzgerald, Duffley, and Regan.

The Sisters have developed three catechetical correspondence courses, expertly illustrated by a Sister of Service, and are preparing a fourth – adapted from “Come to the Father” series. In the courses, parents are vitally involved. The Sisters have a number of students involved in the courses – which they correct – at the charge of \$10.00 per family for a year. The Sisters pioneered religious correspondence courses in Canada; now a number of correspondence centers have been established, and the Sisters supply them with their materials written from their accumulated wisdom.

Sister Gallagher mentioned that the Sisters are always meeting other Sisters, priests, and adults who formerly learned religion through S.O.S. courses.

On our second day in Regina we saw the Queen and Prince Philip, standing no more than five feet from their car. To my delight I got a perfect opportunity for a color slide. Her Majesty came to Canada to honor the R.C.M.P. centennial, and the Mounties originated in Regina. Canadians love their royalty and expressed their respect for the Queen in every possible way. (*sic – Ed.*)

Land of 10,000 Lakes

Finally we wended our way into Manitoba, the land of 10,000 lakes and the Manitoba maple. The country grew more wooded and hilly, and some traffic began to develop. We arrived in Winnipeg just at heavy traffic hour and had a bad time trying to find our way to the Good Shepherd Home there. In desperation, Sister Gallagher drove off the main drag to pull up at a curb. A gentleman got out of his car and said, “Are you ladies lost?” “Yes,” said Sister Gallagher. “Have you been following us?” He laughed and admitted he had noticed

our uncertainty. He gave us explicit instructions, even drawing a sketch. With his help we made it to the Good Shepherd’s, where we received a beautiful welcome.

Sister Elise, R.G.S., drove us around Winnipeg, and to the S.O.S. location there. To Sister Gallagher’s surprise, many Sisters were at home and all enjoyed a good visit.

Next day Sisters Gallagher and MacDougall took off for Camp Morton, and I took the plane to our Provincial Convent in Minnesota. Sister MacDougall’s last request was that I tell her about Amtrack and compare it to the C.N.R. As other Canadians queried me about American passenger rail service, I’ll discuss it here.

I had gone from Vancouver, B.C. to Edmonton by C.N.; from St. Paul, Minn. I returned to Seattle by Amtrack. (An informative article on Amtrack runs in the August *Catholic Digest*.)

Before leaving Seattle I had intended to return via Canada, but found the C.N. much more expensive than Amtrack (figuring on the basis of clergy discounts in both cases), so took the latter home. The C.N. from Winnipeg to Vancouver cost \$50 more than Amtrack from St. Paul to Seattle, cost of meals included – and St. Paul is further east than Winnipeg. In both cases I requested slumber coach: roomette.

The trains were equally comfortable, but Amtrack had the edge on convenience and service. The C.N. ticket included meals, but the selection and quality of food was very inferior to that on Amtrack. I saw one observation car, crowded, on the C.N.; and three with plenty of room on Amtrack. Amtrack is operated by the government, has been going for only two years, and has not yet proved itself financially – but it does surpass the C.N. passenger trains.

Canadians are most friendly and helpful to tourists; a vacation spent in their midst is necessarily a pleasant one.

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THE FIELD AT HOME

*In winter
love asks us
to be open,
to be honest,
and to trust.
Listen to
love in winter.*

THE FIELD AT HOME

VOLUME XLIX / NUMBER 4 / 1973

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Prayer of St. Francis

*Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is sadness, joy;
where there is darkness, light.*

*O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much
seek to be consoled, as to console;
not so much to be understood, as to understand;
not so much to be loved, as to love.*

*For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.*

What better prayer can we pray, what better wish can we make for our readers and friends than that the priceless peace of Jesus, our Lord, be with and in them, and through them to all others, during the hours, the days, and the months of 1974.

MEMO . . . from the editor's desk

IT IS SUNDAY, in mid-December. My apartment living room is in total disarray with gift boxes, gift wrap, cards and partially opened Christmas decorations strewn haphazardly about. The sun is just beginning to go down on a bright and clear winter day. Children are sliding, without benefit of toboggan, down an improvised hill; the Ottawa river which I can see by a mere turn of my head is trying, unsuccessfully so far, to freeze over. The FM radio fills the room and my heart with Christmas music and I have a beautiful feeling of well-being, of peace with the world, of happiness because I am alive. All this has started a train of thought which might be worthwhile sharing with you.

Continued on Page Two

All things being equal we are usually affected by the weather. When skies are leaden and the landscape grim and gray, we tend to be fairly grim ourselves particularly if the grim weather persists over several days. But give us a blue sky, fleecy white clouds and sunshine – our spirits lift; we work and pray more easily; laughter comes more naturally and we can take many things in our stride which bother us during the dull days. This brings me to the Church as Mother.

Just when winter begins to get a grip on the land and shows herself as a season of frequently snow-filled skies, cold weather and the attendant difficulty of adjustment to her harshness, Mother Church ushers in Advent. Advent – the season of hope, of expectancy, of promise. We begin to look forward.

Then Christmas is upon us, the time of peace and good will toward our brothers, whoever they are, whatever or wherever they are. Strangers exchange smiles on busy streets and in equally busy stores. Families come together. Gifts are exchanged. Despite the frequent and frequently true cries of commercialism, the Christmas spirit can give rise to salutary and significant meditation upon the origin of the Christmas spirit which is so essentially unitive.

Hard on the heels of Christmas we have the feast of New Year's. Whatever the commissions, the omissions, the excesses of Christmas we now have an opportunity to begin anew. We can unravel what may have become ravelled in our lives. We may make a fresh start.

Then comes Epiphany, the revelation of God and His Love in the person of the Incarnate Babe to the Gentiles. This first glimpse of the Truth by the Gentiles in the persons of the Magi would be broadened into greater knowledge and understanding through the teaching of St. Paul. But Epiphany was the beginning. This feast reminds us of our responsibility in making Epiphany truly universal. With the words of William Barclay we pray:

*So bring nearer the day when all men will know you and love you;
when the knowledge of you will cover the earth as the waters cover
the sea; when the kingdoms of the world will be your kingdom and
the kingdom of your Christ.*

This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

In the early weeks of winter Mother Church, with a mother's unerring instinct, gives us a series of feasts which lift our hearts, spur us on, and tell us to be of good cheer, to have courage, to keep on keeping on.

Then, a bit later, when our resolves may have become weakened and our spirits again may falter, Lent begins. Though Mother Church now leaves penitential practices to our own sense of responsibility, as is right with her adult children, the great penitential season with its emphasis on the sufferings endured by Jesus, our Lord and our Brother, again stiffens our spines to meet the challenge which His Sacred Passion and Death offers true Christians.

Suddenly it is Easter. Spring has returned to the land and with it the victorious and glorious joy of the Resurrection and His triumph over death. We are in full flight again with our Risen Lord.

After Easter we have the feast of the Most Holy Trinity, the Ascension and finally, the great feast which commemorates the confirmation of the first Christians – the Apostles and Disciples – as followers of Christ: the feast of Pentecost.

Pentecost is very much the feast of the Church but it also reminds us that Jesus has returned to His Father. Lest we become downhearted the Church gives us the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of the Lord (Corpus Christi) to remind us that He is with us in the Eucharist to nourish, strengthen and support us through all our days.

And so through the year, Mother Church knowing our weakness, our faint-heartedness, our mercurial temperaments which can be affected by such extraneous things as the weather, gives us a panorama of the life of Jesus. Interspersed with the events of His life we find the feasts of His Blessed Mother. In following the liturgical year from Advent to Advent we find the helps we need to tread the way our Brother trod. Thus the reason for the liturgical renewal which has emphasized the “sacramental power” emanating from a fitting celebration of the events in the life of Jesus. We can do no better than quote from the Apostolic letter of Pope Paul VI of February 14, 1969:

“With the passage of centuries, the faithful have become accustomed to so many special religious devotions that the principal mysteries of the Redemption have lost their proper place. This was due partly to the increased number of vigils, holydays and octaves, partly to the gradual dominance of various seasons over the entire liturgical year.

“Our predecessors, Saint Pius X and John XXIII, clearly established several rules so that Sunday might be restored to its former dignity and be rightly considered by everyone as ‘the original feast day . . .’

“These popes, with the Fathers and the tradition of the Catholic Church, taught that the historical events by which Jesus Christ won our salvation through his death are not merely commemorated or recalled in the course of the liturgical year even though they instruct and nourish the least educated among the faithful. These pontiffs taught rather that the celebration of the liturgical year exerts ‘a special sacramental power and influence which strengthens Christian life.’ We ourselves believe and profess the same truth . . .

“The purpose of the restoration of the liturgical year and the revision of its norms is none other than to allow the faithful, through their faith, hope, and love, to share more deeply in the ‘whole mystery of Christ as it unfolds throughout the year’.”

As we enter a new year it is our fond hope that our many readers and friends will in 1974, if they have not consciously done so before, enter into the events of the life of Jesus through the liturgical year; that in those events they may find their peace, their happiness, and their reason for striving unremittingly toward the great day of our eternal union with the Holy Trinity.





Winter

Winter is waiting and promise. Its word is often unspoken.
Sometimes too, it is sorrowful and finds itself alone.

Winter knows that love is coming — and wants it to come.
It feels the pull of longing. It looks up to the sky and
out to the hills and the sea. And then it begins to snow.

Love in winter is cold outside and warm inside, ice skating
and fireplaces, snow and mittens.

Love in winter is Christmas. God becomes involved with us.
His Word becomes flesh. He offers peace.

In winter love asks us to be open, to be honest, and to trust.
Listen to love in winter.

from Listen to Love

HAPPINESS

WHERE, THEN, DOES HAPPINESS LIE? In forgetfulness, not indulgence, of the self. In escape from sensual appetites, not in their satisfaction. We live in a dark, self-enclosed prison which is all we see or know if our glance is fixed ever downwards. To lift it upwards, becoming aware of the wide, luminous universe outside – this alone is happiness. At its highest level such happiness is the ecstasy which mystics have inadequately described. At more humdrum levels it is human love; the delights and beauties of our dear earth, its colours and shapes and sounds; the enchantment of understanding and laughing, and all other exercise of such faculties as we possess; the marvel of the meaning of everything, fitfully glimpsed, inadequately expounded, but ever-present.

Such is happiness – not compressible into a pill; not translatable into a sensation; lost to whoever would grasp it to himself alone, not to be gorged out of a trough, or torn out of another's body, or paid into a bank, or driven along a motorway, or fired in gun salutes, or discovered in the stratosphere. Existing, intangible, in every true response to life, and absent in every false one. Pounded through the centuries in every noteworthy word and thought and deed. Expressed in art and literature and music; in vast cathedrals and tiny melodies; in everything that is harmonious, and in the unending heroism of imperfect men reaching after perfection.

When Pastor Bonhoeffer was taken off by his Nazi guards to be executed, as I have read, his face was shining with happiness, to the point that even those poor clowns noted it. In that place of darkest evil, he was the happiest man – he, the executed. I find this an image of supreme happiness.

MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE

As a Man Who Sees

*Lord, tonight, in the quiet darkness, I heard the world
heave a deep sigh, I heard the tragic cry of anguished
men.*

*They do not know where to turn, and therefore they are
searching blindly, losing themselves, rebelling, or
simply resigning themselves.*

*Make me open my ears and my heart so that I may be
able to hear their cries and discover their meaning.
Give me the strength to gather up these cries and offer them
to you as one immense supplication rising from earth
toward you – a prayer:*

*Lord, do not forget our alliance.
Show yourself to us.
We need you.
You are our Saviour.*

*Help me to find you – I, who so often act as though
you were not there.*

*Help me to belong to the world,
but with you within myself,
in my heart,
in my living flesh,
in my human actions.*

*Help me to be one of those who walk,
who walk in life where men walk,
with men,
as a man,
without looking at my feet,
without stumbling as though I were blind,
but with my eyes open as one who sees.*

*Then, Lord, perhaps if they see me walking among them,
as a man who sees,
they will be freed from their anguish.*

MICHEL QUOIST
in *I've Met Jesus Christ*

In Communion With Others

DEEP IN OUR HEARTS there is a call to live in communion with others, a call to love, to create, to risk. But there is also that radical feeling of our poverty when faced with human misery. I am afraid to give myself. I have constructed a world of security around me . . . so many so-called interests which keep me from communing with others . . . I want to, but cannot. So many things seem to prevent me from loving and I feel them in my inmost being . . . so many defenses and fears. I risk losing hope. I risk entering into a world of sadness and I begin to doubt myself. I have doubts about others. I doubt the value of my presence. I doubt everything.

This is our human condition. We want so much but we feel incapable. We believe in love but where is it? There are so many obstacles to break through within ourselves in order to become free and to become present to others; to their misery and to their person.

Our hope is to become freer each day in order to accept others, to be fully present to them. That is our hope. It is only in that way we will be able to give life. Come, Holy Spirit, give us hearts of peace and warmth which can serve as a refuge for those who suffer. Come, help us be present one to another.

JEAN VANIER



Spotlight on Me For 1974

PEACE WITH SELF

Jesus says: "Seek first the kingdom of heaven, and all these things will be given to you."

What are my goals and ambitions?
Do I seek God's glory or my own?
Who or what has first place in my life?
Do I understand that my attachment to sin is
the only thing that keeps God's peace at a distance?

Jesus says: "Where your treasure is, your heart will be."

Where is my treasure?
Am I seeking power and wealth for myself?
Am I storing up treasure in heaven?

Jesus says: "Lift up your heads, your salvation is at hand."

Do I trust God for help and salvation,
or do I despair and give up?
Do I thank God for my vocation in life,
or do I complain and grumble unhappily?
Do I think about the wonderful gifts God has given me?
Do I thank him joyfully for all his gifts?



PEACE WITH OTHERS

God says: "One who loves is patient and kind."

Do I accept the faults of others,
or am I always trying to correct them and change them?
Do I take out my problems and worries on others?
Do I start each day by resolving
to be more kind and cheerful toward others?

God says: "One who loves is not jealous, conceited or proud."

Do I build myself up by tearing others down?
Am I always looking for ways of belittling other people?
Am I big enough to praise others for the good they do?

God tells us: "One who loves is not selfish or irritable."

How often do I go out of my way or hold my tongue
in order to keep peace in things that don't matter?
Am I for ever seeking my own rights?
Does my comfort come before the needs of others?

Jesus says: "Love others as I have loved you."

Do I really care about other people?

Do I show in action what I proclaim in my words?

Do I really believe that I am a liar when I say

I love God and yet do not help others who are in need?

*God teaches us: "Parents, love your children, and care for them.
Children, love and obey your parents."*

Am I kind to others outside my home, and
miserable with the members of my family?

How real is the greeting of peace I share with my family
on Sunday?

What am I doing to make it more sincere?



PEACE WITH GOD

*The Father says "Listen to me, for I am your God, and you are
my people."*

Do we remember that God is our loving Father?

Do we pray to him daily, taking time and effort to praise him?

Do we continue to ask for our needs, even when he seems
slow to answer?

Do we come together to celebrate Sunday Mass as an
act of praise and thanksgiving?

God reminds us: "Thin sowing means thin reaping."

How generous are we with God?

Do we take time to work for his glory?

Do we work for the Church and for the missions?

How important – or unimportant – is God in the life of
our family?

How much time did I spend last week on my own amusement
and entertainment, and how little in God's interests?

Jesus assures us: "My grace is sufficient for you."

Do I trick myself into thinking that I cannot or should not
keep God's commands?

Do I claim it is too hard to be pure,
or foolish to be honest in business?

Do I turn to Jesus in time of temptation?

Am I striving to love God with my whole heart,
with all my mind and all my strength?

Do I pray for help to grow in God's love?

WORLD PEACE

Jesus says: "I was hungry and thirsty and you would not give me anything."

What efforts are we making
at helping hungry nations become self-sufficient?
Do we ever write our M.P. on behalf of positive
legislation for developing countries?

Jesus says: "I was sick and in prison and you would not come to visit me."

Do we make any effort to visit the sick and aged in our
community?
Do we ever try to bring joy into their lives?
Do we work with those who are handicapped?
Do we pray for the sick and the dying?

Jesus says: "I needed clothing and shelter and you would not give me help."

Are we at all concerned about the needs of people who
are less well off?
What are we doing to promote social justice in our
community and country?
How is our parish community showing concern for people
in dire poverty at home and abroad?

Do we ever pray and work for peace in the world?
Can we honestly pray to God
if we neglect his sons and daughters?
Can we call on Jesus in sincere prayer
if we don't intend to help him in our brothers and sisters?



The time has come;
God's kingdom is near,
it is in our midst.
Let us turn away from our sins,
and believe the good news of our salvation,
for Jesus has come to save his people!

*Reprinted with permission from
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Meander Indian Reserve

SISTER EILEEN GALLAGHER, S.O.S., taught last year at Upper Hay River Day Public School on the Indian Reserve at Meander, located in the far north of Alberta. And she has agreed to a continuing contract for next year.

Her grades were Kindergarten and Grade One. The challenge of teaching Indian children was enhanced by the fact that many came to school with no knowledge of English.

There were other difficulties: attendance was likely to be irregular with a couple of youngsters showing for only a few days in the year; parents seldom encouraged education; the children had little or no motivation; the life described in books is unfamiliar and a mystery to the young Indians.

Sister Gallagher opened the school year with stories which did have meaning to her pupils: animal tales. "I learned a lot from them," she said. "They know all about animals, their habitats, and habits." Thus getting them interested and involved, she was able to hold their attention in the reading and writing and arithmetic learning process.

Since there was no action the school itself could take to enforce attendance, Sister tried to make her classroom so interesting that her youngsters would get themselves to school. One day a six-year



Sister Eileen Gallagher, S.O.S., teaching at Upper Hay River Day Public School, Meander, Alberta

old told her that he got himself up, made his own breakfast, and prepared his own lunch for school. She used a variety of visual aids so her students could see the kinds of life-situations which they could not otherwise visualize. And she encouraged crayon drawings – an art in which the smallest children excelled. They could translate their lives into color pictures much more readily than into language.

For the last report cards Sister almost accidentally fell into a technique which



Indian homes on the Reserve



Meander River on the Reservation

the whole school may use next year: she brought the cards to the parents in the children's homes. Thus she was able to make that vital contact with parents which had failed when the school had tried to involve parents in coming to its functions.

During the school week Sister Gallagher lives in her own small house on the Reserve with the other teachers, returning on Fridays to High Level where two more Sisters of Service are

stationed. Because the Reserve is nearly fifty miles from High Level it is not possible to commute daily.

The school building is two years old, modern, and well equipped.

All of the Indians are Catholic, having been served by the Oblate Fathers since many years ago. However, as Sister Gallagher pointed out and as most missionaries now acknowledge, the early Fathers made a mistake in not building Christianity onto the Indian culture —



*Sister Gallagher's
small apartment
on the Reserve,
first door to
the left*

with the result that the Indians now have bits of two cultures and are confused over each. They still dance ancient Indian religious dances which have been divorced from Christianity instead of integrated into it.

The Reserve itself is beautiful, densely forested, hilly, with the Meander River running through it. Some logging is done by the Indians in summer; in winter they go trapping – and are liable to take off overnight bringing the children with them (totally forgetting school). Besides these occupations, the Indians do some fire-fighting in case of forest fires; a couple of times youngsters were caught trying to start fires so their fathers would have work to do. Nice little houses are built and sold to the Indians for \$135 each – but they are liable to break them up in short order.

"They have no motivation," Sister Gallagher pointed out. "If they wreck that house, the government will give them another for \$135." Because the

government provides the Indians with everything they need, they have been deprived of the reason for work and for taking care of what they own.

The Indians on the Meander Reserve are attractive in appearance with round, soft faces and glowing skin. The children are shy and shrink from strangers; they have easy-going, placid dispositions.

Because Sister Gallagher is a religious, the Indians relate to her much more quickly than is usual with white people; and are more accepting and trusting of her. It is also easier for her to maintain discipline in school.

Teacher turn-over in the school is great because teachers become discouraged over the non-attendance of children and their consequent non-learning. Almost all year long the youngsters asked her if she would come back next year. If all goes as planned, Sister will return to Meander Indian Reserve.



Sister Gallagher with three of her students standing beside an outdoor altar



Sister Morgan's last breakfast at High Level, Alberta

SISTER MARGARET MORGAN

IN JUNE, 1973, Sister Margaret Morgan left the S.O.S. mission in High Level for Toronto. She had taught religion in High Level Public School for the past two years. Sister also became very involved in public and social affairs in the town.

The school asked her to be a judge in its oratorical contest; she also judged in the division speech contest at Fort Vermilion.

Sister joined the Auxiliary of the new Public Health Hospital in High Level.

She was in the forefront of the ecumenical movement, selecting readings and music for services. And Sister also helped with Catholic liturgies.

Sister Morgan endeared herself not only to the school children and teachers, but to all the people of High Level.

On her last Sunday at High Level, Sister Morgan's work was acclaimed in his sermon by Father Lesmerises, O.M.I., pastor. He said that she would be greatly missed in this area.



NATIVES ARE BEATITUDE PEOPLE

NATIVES ARE BEATITUDE PEOPLE

Ken Bernard, Winnipeg

Reprinted from *The Prairie Messenger*

This article complements the interview with Sister Denis published in our summer issue of the FIELD AT HOME.

THE APPEARANCE THIS FALL of a couple of catechetical tools to be used in the religious education of native peoples in Canada, is a sign of some import, and thus deserves some comment lest it go unnoticed by the Canadian Church in general.

The two works in question are "Come Lord Jesus: the Story of the Church", a set of hand posters done by Reverend Roger Vandersteene, O.M.I., and edited by Sister Marge Denis, S.O.S.; and "The Beatitude People", a set of 200 slides of Indian life, and suggested catecheses, done by Sister Denis. While these may seem small things, they are in reality major achievements, as well as important signs of what is happening in the Canadian Church.

Some four years ago, though now it seems much longer, when Marge Denis still roamed the western plains, working out of the Office of Religious Education for the Winnipeg diocese, catechetics or religious education was still in the upswing. Fall meetings of the religious education directors from the various western dioceses were already an early sign of the regionalizing of the Canadian Church. Concern for the religious education of the native peoples was being articulated outside the traditional "missionary" circles.

It was at such a meeting that a concern was expressed very explicitly by Father Murphy, then of the National Office of Religious Education, to the staff of the Winnipeg Office. The articulation was still very general; we have to begin somewhere; we have to take that first step; somebody has to take the initiative. With some hesitation yet excitement the staff of the Winnipeg Office answered affirmatively; let it be! And thus began the research project among the native peoples in the Canadian West and North. Sister Marge Denis was a member of that staff, and it was really her "let it be."

She began slowly, travelling over familiar ground, since she was already working as a rural roving catechist for the Winnipeg diocese. Manitoba and Saskatchewan became the area of research as the job went through its part-

time phase. It soon had to become a fulltime job, for the area was as vast and profound as the geographical expanse of the country, and so Marge Denis, while remaining part of the staff at the Winnipeg Office, was freed to do this much needed research fulltime. It was a short step from there to making the whole project a national one, funded nationally by the CCC.

In researching the religious values, ideas and practice of the Canadian Indians, Marge Denis didn't send out what has become accepted as the usual sociological questionnaire-survey. Rather she travelled around, visiting the Indian people; she listened, she talked, she asked, she experienced, she ate, she listened. And late into the night after talking and listening, she wrote it all down.

Without a doubt the paths she passed by had been made by others; the Indians themselves had been there, as had the missionaries. And yet because she came with the naiveté and energy of the novice, she brought a clarified vision, a more precise ear and an extraordinary sensitivity. Marge Denis didn't so much discover as re-discover; she rediscovered the many fine "missionaries" who work among the native peoples; she rediscovered the native peoples themselves to be a beatitude people.

The religious education materials mentioned above come as a response to a need and as a result of the research. They were preceded by many workshops for white catechists and missionaries, by articles in journals, and by reports to the Canadian Church. Through all this Sister Denis doesn't pretend to have native expertise; rather she sees her role as that of interpreter of the native mentality to the white people.

Marge Denis' work is but one effort of the Canadian Church to reach out anew to some of its members. The Oblate Fathers, though not the only religious group working with the native peoples, have long been considered the main evangelizers in this area. They too are renewing their stance and approach, which is painful for it demands a penitential view that one gets only from the vantage point of historical hindsight.

The white element of the Canadian Church is not moving quickly, but it is moving, and readily acknowledging that the native peoples have a richness to contribute to the whole fabric; they are not just pagans to be converted; they are indeed a "beatitude people."

The Here-Where-I-am Tasks

Dear Lord,

I am concerned – genuinely concerned – about the affairs of the universe.

I've pondered the problems of political ideology, of poverty, of war, of population explosion, and of civil rights.

Big problems.

They challenge because they are big problems. They call for mass action, herculean efforts. And I'm eager to plunge in.

To save the world.

So what do I *do*, Lord?

How can I help slay these dragons?

I've already studied the problem,

formed a committee,

held discussions,

made speeches.

And the problems are still there, bigger than ever.

Why can't I get my teeth into the big problems?

You know, Lord.

I keep looking for the grand and glorious chance to serve

and miss the everyday opportunities that are staring me in the face.

I ponder the problems of international relationships

but have not contributed anything to my own relationship with my next-door neighbour.

Poverty? There's a spine-tingling excitement about

world-wide statistics. But *real* poverty, down on the other end of *my* street,

is dirt and squalor –

a depressing thing that I want no part of.

I begin to see.

You're not calling me to be honorary chairman of the International Committee for the Mentally Retarded,

but you may be asking me to help with a Sunday school class for the retarded

children in my own community.

You aren't asking for dramatic effort for noble causes,

but for dogged perseverance on the here-where-I-am tasks.

Big challenges are easy to see – maybe because they are comfortably vague and far off.

It takes insight and intestinal fortitude to sweat out the little challenges.

I'm rather short on insight

and intestinal fortitude.

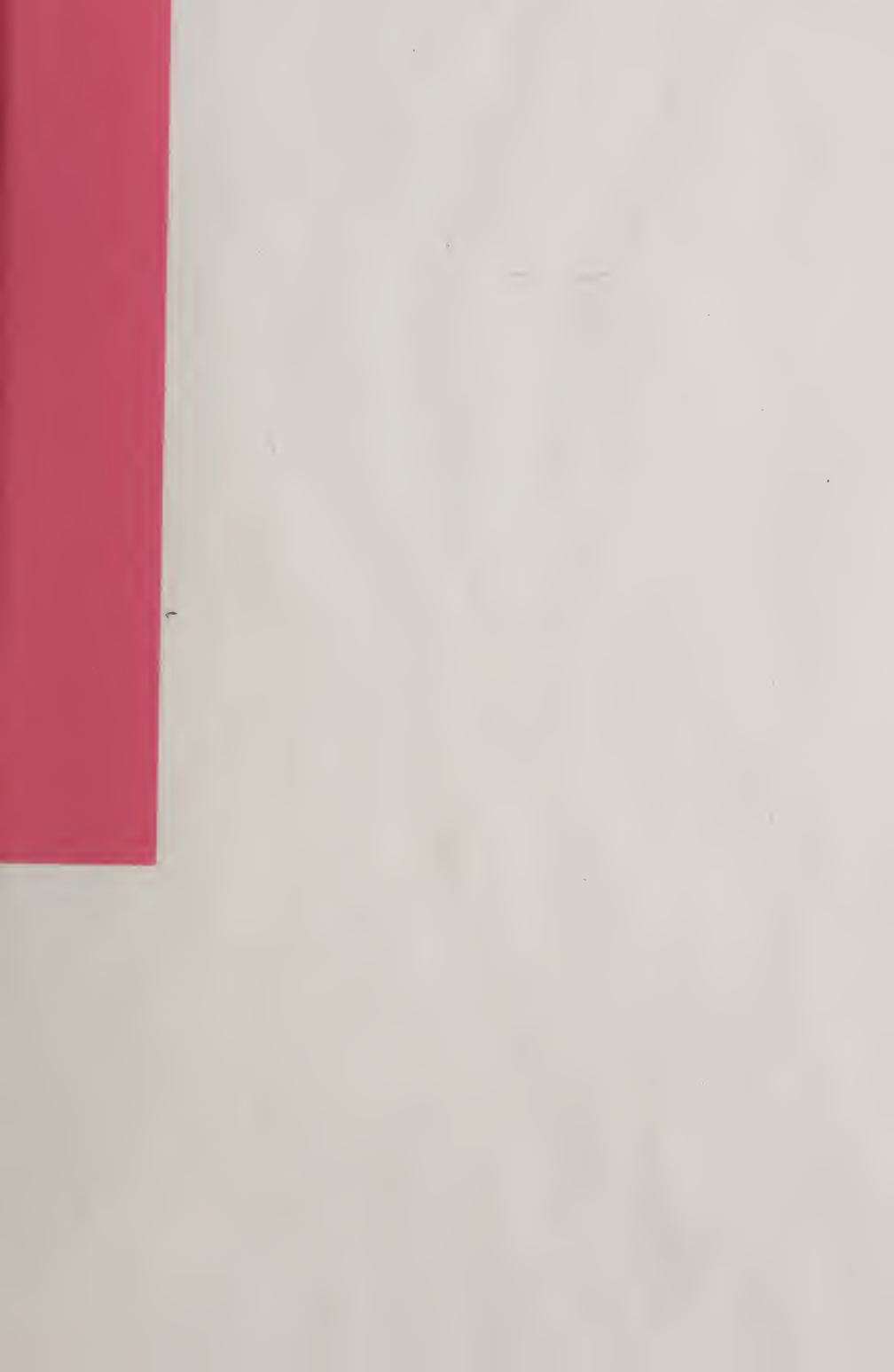
Sharpen my sword, Lord. I've got some everyday-type

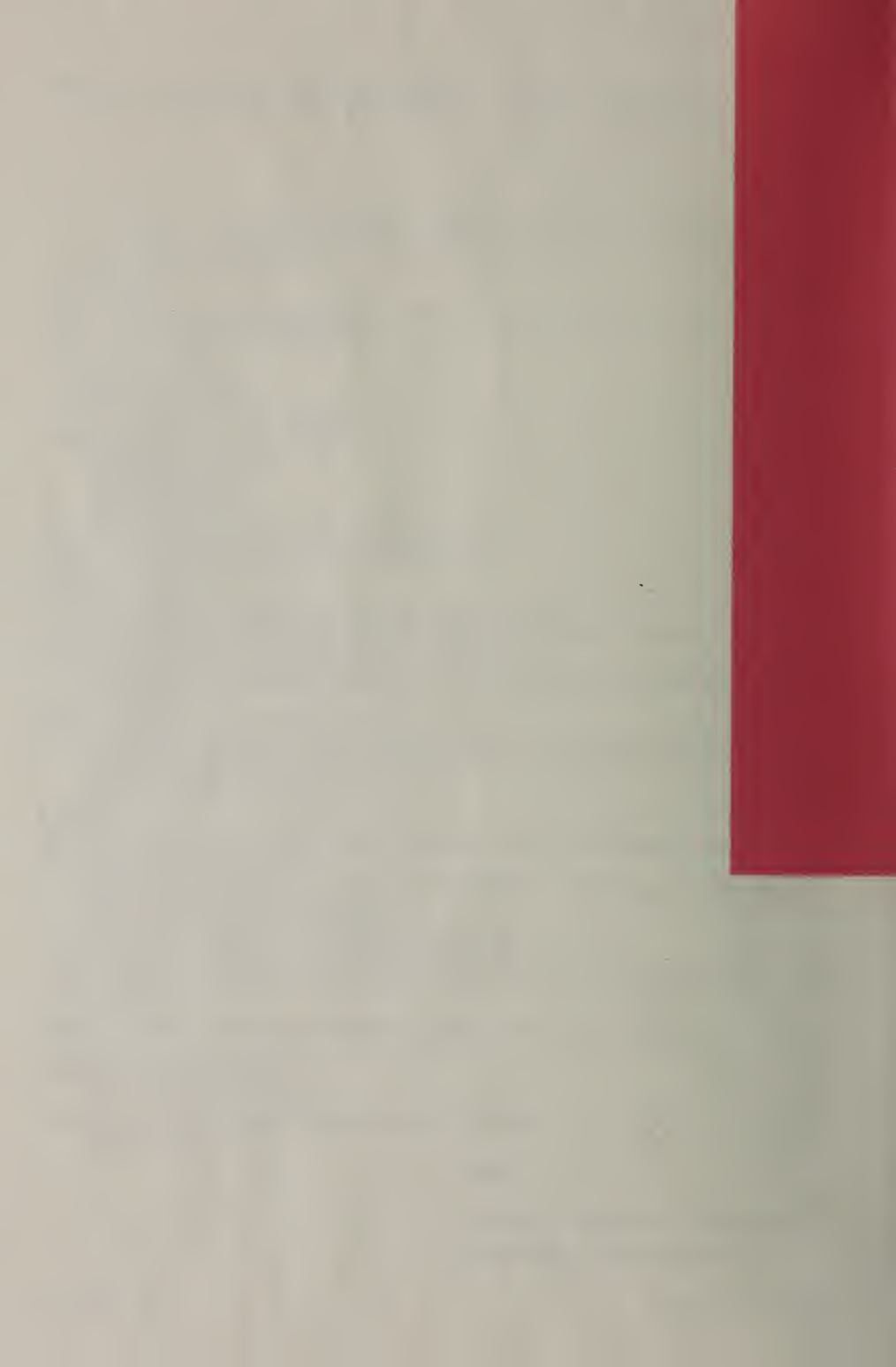
dragons to slay.

Amen.

from *Bless This Mess & Other Prayers*

by JO CARR & IMOGENE SORLEY





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